SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

story by
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screenplay by

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THE SCREEN IS BLACK and we hear innocent but sophisticated music from another time. Patty Page is singing from a tinny speaker.

THE SCREEN FADES IN to an electric neon red and the argon blue TITLE appears:

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

THE SONG CONTINUES:

PATTY PAGE (V.O.)
See the pyramids along the Nile See the sunset on a tropic isle Just remember dear that all the while You belong to me

1 INT. BOMB SHELTER - PRE-DAWN 1

We drift away from the electric red and out of a RED LIGHT BULB continuing to pull back through a THICK WIRE CAGE which surrounds the bulb. The cage is bolted to a lead wall that is studded with rivets. We drift down past a rod supporting a pair of incongruous curtains. There is no window. Through the thin material, we can see the riveted patterns on the grey lead wall.

The camera comes to REST on a portable 45 RPM record player that is spinning the Patty Page platter in this mysterious red-lit place. The record player is attached with iron strips bolted to the floor.

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We see a stainless steel combination toilet/sink bolted to the wall. The camera PANS across the room, past a large rig with shock absorbers and two bucket seats. It continues past small bunk and finally finds BRIAN AND PEGGY JONES.

Brian takes out a gold pocket watch and looks at it. His hand shakes as he puts it back and he misses his pocket. The watch dangles from his belt by its gold chain.

They sit down in the BUCKET SEATS and strap themslves in. They slowly hook themselves up to a large grey, old-fashioned machine. They help each other tape electrodes to their chests, arms and legs. Brian and Peggy Jones are in their early twenties. Brian has a 1950's type crewcut. Peggy's hair is in a flip.

Brian reaches over and activates another machine that looks like a proto-type of the first x-ray machine. It is attached to the grey wall with iron bolts.

We are in a stark, bare BOMB SHELTER.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: 1

A voice is talking to them over a Bullhorn speaker mounted firmly to the ceiling.

SPEAKER VOICE (V.O.)
(kindly, coaxing)
Okay, Brian, Peggy, we're ready to start the final countdown... and that's coming up just about now.

2ND SPEAKER VOICE (V.O.)
That's it. We're committed past fail-safe. Here we go... Sixty seconds and counting...

1ST SPEAKER VOICE
Brian, are you and Peggy hooked up to the accelerator?

BRIAN
Yes.

1ST SPEAKER VOICE (V.O.)
Alright then. It's time to administer your injections.

The music stops and we hear the record player mechanism as it drops another record from the stack and plays another song.

Brian opens a small medical bag and takes out two containers holding prepared hypodermic needles. They help each other tie rubber tourniquets around their arms. They look deeply into each others eyes for a long moment. Neither one of them is able to move. 280

SPEAKER VOICE (V.O.)
All set?

Brian snaps out of his trance.

BRIAN
Yes. Just one second.

Then, like diabetics, they give one another their shots. Peggy starts to cry. Brian puts his arms around her.

2ND SPEAKER VOICE (V.O.)
Thirty seconds and counting.

1ST SPEAKER VOICE (V.O.)
Brian, Peggy. Ready! Ready!

2 EXT. DESERT - PRE-DAWN 2

Inside a bunker, behind a high burn of sand, MILITARY MEN and TECHNICIANS make last minute preparations. They start to put on dark opaque protective glasses.

A SMALL, ENERGETIC WOMAN, NINA, takes the microphone from the hand of a technician.

NINA
(softly, German accent)
Good luck, my children. I love you.

We hear the countdown as it continues.

SPEAKER (V.O.)
...twenty-two, twenty-one, twenty...

3 EXT. TOWER WITH BOMB - WIDE SHOT - PRE-DAWN 3

SPEAKER (V.O.)
...nineteen, eighteen, seventeen...

ANGLE - INT. TOWER

We see the BOMB. It is huge. It has the bulk of a VW Bug. It is grey and black with hundreds of wires. The word SAMSON is stencilled on its side in dark red letters. The complex mass of darkness reminds us of death. CLANG - BZZZZZ - a horrible, screeching mechanical sound is coming from the God-awful thing. The sound changes as it switches gears, accelerating. We DOLLY IN CLOSER.

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SPEAKER (V.O.)
...sixteen, fifteen, fourteen...

4 EXT. DESERT - PRE-DAWN 4

ANGLE - CARS PARKED IN A LINE

We DOLLY across the parked cars, incongruous in the enormous expanse of desolate sand, and see there are DUMMIES behind the steering wheels. We arrive at what appears to be a fifteen-foot Concrete Block with a ten ton DOOR like a bank vault.

5 INT. BOMB SHELTER - PRE-DAWN 5

SPEAKER (V.O.)
... eleven, ten, nine...

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: 5

ANGLE - BULLHORN SPEAKER
which is mounted on the ceiling next to the interior door.

We hear a TING - TING - TING.

WE PAN DOWN the ladder and over to see Brian and Peggy huddled together, strapped into the bucket seats and the gimble of shock absorbers. The TINGING sound is Brian's pocket watch chiming the hour.

SPEAKER (V.O.)
... eight, seven, six...

PEGGY
Oh, Brian... I'm afraid.

BRIAN
I did it for us, Peggy! I love you!

PEGGY
I love you!

Brian's watch stops chiming.

SPEAKER (V.O.)
... three, two, one, zero.

6 INT./EXT. H-BOMB TOWER - PRE-DAWN 6

The drumming cacophony of motors stop.

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7 INT. THE BUNKER - PRE-DAWN 7

The military observers are frozen. What's going on?

8 EXT. DESERT - PRE-DAWN 8

There is a long silent pause. The desert floor whips with wind. Everyone is waiting... waiting...

CUT TO:

GOD'S POV OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE
We see a blinding flash of light on the shadow line of dawn that separates day from night. It reveals a pinpoint of light brighter than the sun. It sends aureola waves which sear through the stratosphere. In the foreground thousands of fingers of fire burn an astonishing portion of the atmosphere.

9 INT. BUNKER - NUCLEAR DAYLIGHT 9

Nina bites down on her lip as the deafening roar breaks across the desert. KBOOOOOMM!! Her features twist with fear as we DOLLY IN quickly on her anguished face. The sight is to much for her. She turns away, screaming in horror.

10 INT. BOMB SHELTER - DAY 10

There is a CRACKING SOUND, barely discernible over the noise of the bomb, and we see the ceiling as it bows in slightly.

A small fissure opens and a slender finger of intense white light blasts through hitting the floor. The floor turns red and scars where it's hit.

11 EXT. DESERT FLOOR - DAY 11

DOWN ANGLE. The sand has turned to glass. Combat boots crash into frame. We follow teams of TROOPS as they run across the steaming surface. The heavy door that leads to the shelter has melted and is covered with glass.

12 EXT. BOMB SHELTER - DAY 12
ANGLE - The image of the sun reflected in the nuclear glass shatters as PICKS AND AXES anxiously break the glass exposing the door to the shelter.

13 INT. BOMB SHELTER - DAY 13

ANGLE looking up at the hatch. We can hear the sounds of picks breaking through. The hatch is shattered and pulled aside. We see a blast of sunlight and heads looking down. 280

CUT TO:

14 A PROJECTED BLACK AND WHITE IMAGE FLICKERS TO LIFE: 14
ACADEMY LEADER COUNTDOWN
SIX... FIVE... FOUR... THREE... TWO...
ONE...

1950'S MOVIETONE NEWSREEL MUSIC. TITLE APPEARS:

"AMERICA'S FIRST NUCLEAR FAMILY"

CUT TO:

Grainy B & W footage of BRIAN and PEGGY JONES. The quintessential 50's husband and wife. Very attractive; incredibly well-groomed. Brian smokes a pipe. Peggy wears a little starched, plaid apron.

A Paul Harvey-type narration begins.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 14

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Meet Brian and Peggy Jones. America's first Nuclear Family!

14A STOCK B&W FOOTAGE 14A

They are in an unbelievably attractive BOMB SHELTER, so well-appointed the average American would swap it for his own home.

Brian is at a little desk going over papers. Peggy is unpacking two suitcases and putting things away.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
American heroes for America's future, Brian and Peggy are the most important part of the patriotic team leading the way in peace-time testing to produce jobs, insure our security... and harness the power of the atom!

DISSOLVE TO:

14B -STOCK B & W FOOTAGE of steel towers and criss-crossed power cables. 14B

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Power so incredible that one pound of uranium will yield eleven billion, four hundred million kilowatt hours of electricity! Enough to meet the total needs of the United States for weeks!

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DISSOLVE TO:

14C -STOCK B & W FOOTAGE of a 1950's atom bomb. 14C

NARRATOR (V.O.)
But, with that power comes awesome responsibility!

DISSOLVE TO:

14D -STOCK B & W C.U. of the bomb. It is dark and threatening. 14D

NARRATOR (V.O.)
A new tool has been given mankind. But, in the wrong hands, one of unimaginable destructive power! And that is why we must remain ever vigilant... ever prepared!

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2) 14

14E STOCK B & W FOOTAGE - INT. FACTORY - DAY. **14E**
A TEAM OF ARCHITECTS goes over their blueprints.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Project Samson! This shelter's guaranteed to take the anxiety out of the Atomic Age. United Technologies has made sure it's got it all!
(beat)
Special air filtration and circulating systems!
(beat)
Food and survival supplies for seven days!

The architects look up from the plans. It's great. They're satisfied.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And can this baby take it!

14F -STOCK B & W FOOTAGE of the BOMB SHELTER being built. Shots that fit actions to his words. **14F**

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Reinforced steel! Six inches of corrugated lead! Three feet of concrete!
(beat)
And twenty feet underground! It can take a near direct hit from a 10 megaton hydrogen bomb and laugh it off!

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14G -STOCK B & W SHOTS of BULLDOZERS pushing tons of sand. **14G**

NARRATOR (V.O.)
All that and a new anti-radiation project so top-secret even the President has to ask for clearance!

14H -STOCK B & W SHOTS of architects and workmen. They roll up their blueprints and take one last look at their work. A job well done. **14H**

NARRATOR (V.O.)
That's how we build 'em in the U.S. of A.! Strong! Strong enough to protect Brian and Peggy Jones!

14I STOCK COLOR SHOT - DESERT - DAY **14I**

ANGLE - THE BLAST.
SHOT of the mushroom cloud in color. Not too loud and almost beautiful.

15 INT. BOMB SHELTER - DAY B & W SHOT 15

GENERALS and SCIENTISTS surround Brian and Peggy congratulating them.

A SCIENTIST runs a geiger counter past the couple and then over a small tray on the table. In it are Brian and Peggy's wedding rings, Peggy's earrings and Brian's pocket watch. The geiger counter doesn't click and the scientist smiles.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Cleansing process . . . complete! No signs of Radiant Energy!

Brian and Peggy take their wedding rings out of the tray and put them on each other.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Success! And America moves forward again! In the forefront of TECHNOLOGY and PROGRESS!!
(beat)
And what of Brian and Peggy? What about the heroes of our story?

15A -B & W TWO SHOT OF BRIAN AND PEGGY standing next to an early Fifties bullet-nose Studebaker. Peggy still wears her plaid apron. Brian smokes his pipe as a General pumps his hand. 15A

NARRATOR (V.O.)
It's off to their new home and new life in Phoenix, Arizona where Brian will continue his important work in atomic research... while Peggy sets up housekeeping.
(beat)
So long, Brian and Peggy. America thanks you!

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The screen fills with the image of perforations as the projector runs out of film.

WE DOLLY BACK FROM a large portable screen set up on a tripod to find we are in ...

16 INT. LARGE CEMENT BLOCK ROOM 16

A burst of applause echoes in the dark room as pools of light fade up. There is no way of knowing whether it is day or night as there are no windows in the room.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

All around are MILITARY MEN, WHITE COATED SCIENTISTS and, clothed in dressing gowns almost like patients, Brian and Peggy. Nina, stays close to the couple.

Everyone is drinking champagne and toasting each other over the success of the project. There are tables with white cloths being set for a dinner party. The mood is festive as the applause continues.

Nina leans in close to Brian and Peggy.

NINA
Yes! The latest tests are negative! Absolutely no trace of Mercury... and the radiation level in your bone marrow is completely in the normal range! The isolation period is over! You're clean! The vaccine worked!

The couple is overcome. Peggy cries. Brian's eyes glisten as he looks towards heaven with thanks. He holds Peggy close to him.

Towards the back of the room a tall, thin ARISTOCRATIC MAN in his forties and wearing a very expensive suit stands unnoticed by himself. He watches everything carefully but his demeanor does not invite anyone to approach.

A GENERAL gets to his feet. His face is beaming.

GENERAL
Excellent!
(All around seem to concur)
Excellent! I'm very pleased.
(He turns to Brian and Peggy)
You know, you're going to be very famous! This will be the first ever technicolor insert in a newsreel!
(He raises his glass)
A toast! To Brian and Peggy. America's first nuclear family!

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A CHEER goes up from everyone in the room as they all salute the lucky couple. Brian and Peggy smile brightly. They stand very close to each other, holding hands tightly. The General can't help but notice. He gives them a very fatherly smile.

GENERAL
Two months is a long time for newlyweds to have been apart. I know. Believe it or not I was actually young once myself!

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2) 16

He laughs at this little joke as do his AIDES. So do Brian and Peggy.

FIFTIES MUSIC IS PIPED IN OVER THE P.A. SYSTEM. Some of the people, including Brian and Peggy, start to dance.

A COLONEL, with a questioning look on his face, touches the General's arm and whispers something in his ear. They both turn and look to the back of the room. The General is pleased. He brushes aside the Colonel and marches towards the expensively dressed man in the rear.

GENERAL
Mr. Olander! Nobody told me you were here!

Olander smiles non-committally.

GENERAL
Peggy! Brian! Come here! I want you to meet someone!

They stop dancing and, hand in hand, come over.

GENERAL
Mr. and Mrs. Jones... I'd like you to meet Lewis Olander. He's the president of United Technologies, Brian. So, he's your new boss!

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Brian looks at the ground uncomfortably. He takes out his pocketwatch and nervously winds the stem.

BRIAN
How do you do, sir.

OLANDER
Very well, thank you. Very well.
(Olander looks at him more like a specimen than a person)
That's a beautiful watch. Is it old?

BRIAN
Yes. It was my father's. Someday it will be my son's.

GENERAL
Brian, show him the picture of the house you picked!

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (3) 16

Brian and Peggy's faces light up. Brian takes out a snapshot of a small white house with a charming picket fence. He holds it out to Olander who at first doesn't seem to know what they want from him. Realizing what he's supposed to do, he takes it from Brian, looks at it cursorily and hands it back.

OLANDER
Very nice.

GENERAL
And ten thousand in the bank to cover incidentals. I'd say that makes for a pretty nice start in life, eh?

Everybody seems to agree. The music plays on.

17 INT. SMOKE-FILLED CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 17

The blinds are drawn causing slices of light to pierce the room. Some of the familiar project members are present, including the General, the Colonel and some of the scientists. The General's face is red.

GENERAL
Pull it! We can't release that newsreel now!
(beat)
Pregnant! How in God's name could she be pregnant!?

COLONEL
You put a man and a woman alone underground, what do you expect them to do? Play Parchessi?

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There's a little isolated snickering.

SCIENTIST
Well, I don't think that's the issue any longer. The question at hand is what do we do about it?

GENERAL
Well, what can we do? She's pregnant and that's that.

SCIENTIST
(quietly)
It could be terminated.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: 17

GENERAL
Terminated? You mean an abortion. I don't know. That makes me very uneasy.

SCIENTIST
I think it's probably advisable... under the circumstances.

There's isolated talk among the people. Nobody looks particularly thrilled. The General turns towards the end of the table.

GENERAL
Mr. Olander, what do you think?

ANGLE - OLANDER. His face is cold. Implacable.

CUT TO:

18 INT. DELIVERY ROOM - DAY 18

C.U. of Peggy. Her hair is matted with sweat. She looks exhausted. A squirming shadow rises up covering her face.

WE HEAR a loud SLAP and then a baby CRYING LOUDLY. Peggy's face relaxes. She smiles.

19 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY 19

Brian is grinning from ear to ear as he comes in the door in his Sunday best carring flowers and a round red box the size of a small hatbox. Peggy, looking bright and pretty, is sitting up in bed. 280

BRIAN
Well, we did it, babe!

PEGGY
Oh, Brian, he's so beautiful!

The room looks like a floral shop and the small bouquet Brian is carrying pales in comparison. Brian looks around the room then uncomfortably hands her his bouquet.

BRIAN
We could have put him through school with what they spent on flowers.

PEGGY
(kissing him)
Yours are the most beautiful!

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: 19

Brian smiles.

BRIAN
Hey, look! David's first present!

He opens the red box he's carrying and shows it to her... a beautiful toy carrousel. He winds it up and it comes to life, playing a haunting music box lullaby as the horses and circus animals go around and around.

Inside the box lying on the bunched up tissue paper, we see a handwritten card:

"FOR MY SON... ON THE DAY OF HIS BIRTH. MAY YOUR LIFE ALWAYS BE A MERRY-GO-ROUND"

20 INT. HOSPITAL NURSERY - DAY 20

Behind a glass partition we see a lone crib. It is surrounded by doctors and military men. They are examining Brian and Peggy's baby from top to bottom.

DOCTOR
His vital signs are all perfect. No signs of radiation.
(beat)
He does have a slight fever though. About 100.

MILITARY MAN
Is that anything to worry about?

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DOCTOR
Not really. Low grade infection perhaps. We'll have him watched. But, some people actually have permanently high body temperatures. He might be one of those.

COLONEL
Hmmmph... August 6th.
(he laughs)
There's a heck of a birthday. Under the circumstances.

DOCTOR
What do you mean?

COLONEL
Today's the tenth anniversary of the day they dropped the bomb on Hiroshima. Pretty funny, huh?

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: 20

They all step back as Nina comes over and takes the baby in her arms. There is a very noticeable BIRTHMARK on its hand - a large, red circle that gets lighter and lighter towards its edges. It's circled by a thin red line. It is so perfect and clear that it almost looks like a tatoo. They all watch her as she walks out of the nursery with the baby.

21 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY 21

The carrousel is turning around and Peggy sings a soft lullaby to its music as she nurses the baby. The look on her face is one of sheer bliss as Brian sits to the side, proud, but a little embarrassed to be watching this rather intimate scene. He takes out his pocket watch and winds the stem. He looks at it. It's almost twelve noon.

PEGGY
Sleep, baby, sleep in my arms You're Mommy's little pearl Daddy will keep you safe from harm Our love will save the world

The song gives us a strange and lonely feeling. Nina comes over and puts her hand on Peggy's forehead.

NINA
You're still a little warm. I think we better take your temperature.

A NURSE hands Peggy a thermometer and starts to take the baby 280 gently out of his mother's arms. Peggy puts the thermometer in her mouth as the nurse lifts the baby across Peggy's chest. The baby's body brushes against the thermometer that Peggy is clenching in her teeth and it breaks off at the teeth. We see the silvery liquid mercury hit her lips.

NINA
Oh! Watch out!

BRIAN
(reaching for a glass of water)
Here. Wash your mouth out. Don't swallow. (Peggy swishes the water in her mouth) Spit it out here.

He holds an empty glass under her mouth and she spits. The liquid hits Brian's hand. He wipes it off on his pants leg.

NINA
Make sure there isn't any glass.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 21

PEGGY
It's okay. I've got it all.

Nina takes the baby from the nurse and stands in the doorway smiling warmly. She holds the baby's hand up and makes it wave "bye-bye".

PEGGY
Bye-bye, darling David. Mommy loves you.

Peggy holds her hands out towards the baby. Suddenly we start to see SMOKE coming from the tips of her fingers. It curls up towards the ceiling.

Nina is stunned. So are Peggy and Brian. More and more smoke starts to rise from her forearms now, too.

22 INSERT: C.U. 22
of Peggy's hands as little flames start to appear at the tips of her fingers.

Nina screams and yells for a doctor. The baby starts to cry loudly. The plastic cover on the light switch next to Nina melts.

Peggy turns towards Brian with her arms still held out pleadingly to him just as the smoke and flames start to appear all over her body. Brian jumps to his feet so quickly that his watch flips out of his hand and lands in the folds of the blanket at the far end of the bed.

He stops dead in his tracks as he sees the same thing is starting to happen to him. They throw their arms around each other as the effect intensifies.

22A INSERT: C.U. 22A
Peggy and Brian reflected in the watch's crystal. The hands reach 12:00. the watch starts to chime.

ANGLE - NINA'S POV - TWO SHOT BRIAN AND PEGGY

Brian looks at Nina. He tries to speak, but we can't hear what he's saying. The noise is too loud. We hear the sound of the combustion as the bodies suck shards of etheric fire from the burning air around them. It sounds like the atmosphere is screaming. They tighten their embrace as the fire bursts out from inside their clothing. They light up as bright as the blinding sun as the fire consumes their bodies.

23 INT. LARGE CEMENT BLOCK ROOM - NIGHT 23

We are in the same room where the celebration party was held. But, now it is sterile, spotless, empty except for the bed from Peggy's hospital room. It is exactly the same as it was when we last saw it. Nothing has been changed. It has been brought to this room completely intact.

A cadaveresque looking MAN in very formal European attire is standing to one side with Lewis Olander. He is looking through a thick book.

We hear a loud THUD as a hand is smashed down on the desk.

NINA
(irate)
No! I refuse to believe that! You can't tell me you didn't know this potential existedt!

GENERAL
(calmly)
You can believe whatever you like Dr. Fischer, but we didn't. And please, spare us your indignation. You were a part of this team.

SCIENTIST
(staring at the bed)
Unbelievable. All the moisture is gone. Even the bone marrow.

NINA
(looking sick)
Oh, God!

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SCIENTIST
(excited)
It would take a temperature of 6000 degrees Centrigrade to do something like this. It's the cleanest kill I ever saw!

GENERAL
That's all very interesting. But, the question I want answered is... what caused it...
(beat)
...and can it be repeated?

Nina is stunned. She can't believe what she's hearing.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 23

The group walks towards the bed. They look at the embryonic black puffed remains of Brian and Peggy. Although the bodies are completely charred, the pillows and sheets are only scorched. The man with Olander closes his book.

MAN
(heavy accent)
Did all the plastic in the area burn?

SCIENTIST
Yes. It all liquified.
(He looks at the man curiously)
How did you know?

OLANDER
This is Dr. Vandermeer, I've asked him to join us tonight.

SCIENTIST
How do you do.

VANDERMEER
(ignoring him)
The bodies burn, the plastic melts, but everything else remains untouched. The signs are almost identical.

GENERAL
Identical? To what? What do you mean?

Vandermeer opens his heavy book consulting it frequently as he speaks. The camera starts to DOLLY IN on him slowly. 280

VANDERMEER
In the winter of 1904 Wales was in the grip of what some called supernatural forces. The focus of these "disturbances" was a Mrs. Mary Jones on whose fervent preachings three balls of reddish fire would hover and dip in a manner some found uplifting and more found gravely disturbing.
(The camera continues to DOLLY IN)
As the religious fever increased, enthusiasts invaded churches and police stations confessing sins and crimes they had not committed. Violence flared.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2) 23

VANDERMEER (Cont'd)
One man, taking a biblical passage literally, chopped his right hand off.
(beat)
Then came the burnings.
(The camera gets closer and closer. He is almost in C.U.)
First. Mrs. Thomas Cochrane. Found seated in a chair stuffed with pillows. She had been burned beyond recognition. But, neither the pillows nor the chair had been touched. No one heard the victim cry. The hearth was cold.
(The camera stops on his face. E.C.U.)
They called it the Fire from Heaven.

They stand hypnotized by his words.

Vandermeer, lost in fascination, moves closer to the puffed bloated impressions of Brian and Peggy. The others are transfixed by the image of the two bodies fused into the metal rail headboard. They are upright and embracing, melded into one another.

VANDERMEER
You see, SHC is a naturally occuring phenonmonon, but the odds of its striking any particular individual are millions to one.
(beat)
I believe the complex series of vaccines your subjects were given combined with the radiation from the blast in such a way as to dramatically reduce those odds to...one to one.

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ANGLE - OVER VANDERMEER'S SHOULDER at Brian and Peggy.

He moves in for a closer look. So do we. The Camera DOLLIES IN until both heads are in Close-up. What's left of them is dense black ash.

VANDERMEER
Yes. The Fire from Heaven was certainly here today, Dr. Fischer.
(beat)
See here.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (3) 23

He takes a pencil out of his pocket and holds it in front of him like a sword. He studies the charred puffball that is all that remains of Brian's head looking for the proper angle and then, as Nina gasps loudly, thrusts his poised pencil into it. He wiggles it around for a second until the puffball cracks open and he extracts Brian's skull - shrunken to the size of a baseball - on the point of his pencil. He holds up his prize with great satisfaction.

VANDERMEER
You see! SHC! Spontaneous Human Combustion!

24 INT. NURSERY - NIGHT 24

ANGLE ON Peggy and Brian's baby in his crib crying. The plastic along the protective rails is slightly warped. We hold on his hand, on the red atom-shaped BIRTHMARK, as his crying begins to die out.

DISSOLVE TO:

25 INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY 25

The same red BIRTHMARK, now larger, on a grown man's hand. We hear a woman reading Shakespeare in the background as the camera starts to PULL BACK.

WOMAN (V.O.)
Why have my sisters husbands if they say
They love you all?
(con't.)

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THE CAMERA CONTINUES BACK revealing a WOMAN and a MAN holding scripts, seated on the bare stage of A HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM.

ANGLE - LISA WILCOX, a beautiful woman in her twenties. She is wearing an ARMBAND with the international symbol for nuclear power in a red circle with a slash through it. Her clothing and her hair indicate that we are now in the present. She wears a crystal around her neck.

LISA
(con't.)
Haply, when I shall wed, That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry Half my love with him, half my care and duty. Sure I shall never marry like my sisters, To love my father all.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 25

ANGLE - SAM KRAMER -
the man with the birthmark - handsome, anti-nuke armbanded, in his mid-thirties. He is sitting in a chair facing Lisa, auditioning with her. He dramatically waves his arms as he "acts".

SAM
But, goes thy heart with this?

LISA
Ay, my good lord.

SAM
So young and so untender?

LISA
So young, my lord and true.

Sam gets to his feet and walks grandly around the stage, really hamming it up.

SAM
Let it be so! Thy truth then be thy flower!

Sam mugs at her and keeps on keeping on. Nothing can stop him.

SAM
(Very theatrical)
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate and the night,
By all the operation of the orbs From whom we do exist and cease to be,
(He throws his arm dramatically up in the air)
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity, and property of blood, And as a stranger to my heart and me
(big finish. He points his finger accusingly at Lisa)
Hold thee from this forrr-ever!

280

We hear boos.

DIRECTOR (V.O.)
That's awful!

VICKY (V.O.)
Give him the hook!

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2) 25

SAM
(amazed)
What are you talking about! This is great stuff!

Seated in the house seats, the director, A YOUNG BOY OF 16, makes a face. His THREE TEENAGE PARTNERS agree. They are also wearing anti-nuke armbands.

DIRECTOR
In your dreams!

VICKY
Really, Mr. Kramer. You stink!

SAM
What!?
(beat)
Wait a minute. Let's get a second opinion.

He turns to Lisa.

SAM
Well?

LISA
Well what?

SAM
Don't be coy. What do you think? 280

LISA
The truth?

SAM
Of course the truth!

LISA
Don't give up your day job.

The students all cheer. Sam puts his hands to his heart. Mortally wounded.

SAM
Arrrggh!

He gasps for air, spins around three times and falls to the floor dead. The students are on their feet applauding.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (3) 25

DIRECTOR
Now, that's acting!

VICKY
Why can't you give us some of that when we need it?

Sam gets to his feet and brushes himself off.

SAM
I think I need a new girlfriend!
(Lisa gives him a "who me" look)
And you...
(he points at the director)
I'll see you in class!

DIRECTOR
Hey, if you want the part that bad, we'll talk!

They all laugh.

26 INT. SCHOOL HALL - DAY 26

We can see the High School controversy of the day. Anti-nuke, pro-nuke. 90% of the students are wearing armbands for or against. Most against.

A TEENAGE BOY AND GIRL, books under arms, are walking down the hall hand in hand. When they see what's coming they look amazed.

280

ON SAM AND LISA. Also walking hand in hand. But, they're teachers! Sam makes a funny face at the teenagers. They smile and shake their heads. They can't believe how weird Mr. Kramer is.

TWO TEENAGE GIRLS, JENNIFER and SALLY, are helping A MID-THIRTIES SEMI-PREPPY TEACHER put up a poster which reads:

"STUDENTS FOR NUCLEAR LOGIC"

They are all wearing pro-nuclear logic armbands and are standing next to a GIANT MAP OF THE WORLD. On it are little bulbs indicating all of the working nuclear power plants in the world. The largest bulb is clearly marked CERRITO.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 26

SPRINGER
Really, Kramer...are you a teacher or do you go to school here? Ms. Wilcox hasn't even been here a month and . . .

He gives them a disapproving look and Sam and Lisa reluctantly let go of each others hands.

SAM
Milt-ton, don't you ever get tired of being such an antique?

Springer looks deeply in Sam's eyes studying them. He gets very serious.

SPRINGER
How are you, Sam? You look... well.

Sam is totally confused. He can't stand the guy... yet, how do you hate someone who so obviously worries about you? Jennifer looks at Sam closely, too, and then takes a little pad out of her pocket and makes a note.

SAM
I'm fine, Milton. Your endless concern is genuinely touching... if not a little perplexing.
(beat)
You know, Milton, you're not such a bad guy. How can you sponsor a carnival like this? Half the county's been fighting to keep that dump shut for ten years!

SPRINGER
When this map lights up, Kramer, you'll sing a different tune. Nuclear power is the future. To not learn from it, conquer it and harness it would be a crime. That's logic.
(beat)
Don't be an obstructionist. The next thing you know you'll want us to go back to living in caves and cooking over fires! Like the sixties!

280

He and Jenniger laugh. Sam calls to a GIRL who's carrying a clipboard.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (2) 26

SAM
Hey, Vicky. Come here.
(beat)
Let me have that, will you. I want to sign it <u>again</u>!

LISA
What's that?

SAM
The petition against Dr. Julian.
(Sam takes the clipboard from Jennifer and signs the petition. He hands it to Lisa
This is the clown who runs Cerrito. Milt-ton brought him here last week to organize <u>pro</u>-nuclear power committees. And I shook the bastard's hand! I felt like such a hypocrite.

VICKY
(lecturing)
We have to put a stop to all the damage adults have done, before it's too late. We have to make our environment safe for kids and other animals!

SAM
Hey, Vicky. In case you hadn't heard, I happen to be an adult... and I didn't have anything to do with it.

VICKY
Not you, Mr. Kramer. You don't count.

280

SAM
(not sure if he should be flattered or not)
Thanks.

VICKY
I <u>meant</u> Mr. Springer.

Sam holds out the petition to Springer.

SAM
Whattaya say, Milt. Last minute conversion?

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (3) 26

SPRINGER
Not likely.

SAM
It's never too late... until it's too late.

They turn to leave. Jennifer and Sally sticks their tongues out at Vicky.

SAM
(to Jennifer and Sally)
Hey, I almost forgot. Congratulations. I heard you guys got into Harvard (under his breath to Lisa) I don't know how.

JENNIFER AND SALLY
(sweetly)
And by the way, Mr. Kramer, Happy Birthday!

Sam looks shocked. So does Lisa.

LISA
How did you know it was his birthday? That's supposed to be top secret.

Jennifer and Sally turn back to posturing with a vengeance.

JENNIFER
(evasively)
I don't know. I just did.

We hear a BEEP BEEP BEEP. Springer looks at his watch. 280

SPRINGER
Eleven o'clock. Somebody else's birthday, too.

SAM
Huh?

SPRINGER
They'll have just put in Cerrito's core. It doesn't go on-line until midnight, but today is it's official birthday.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (4) 26

SAM
Whoopee. What an honor. Hiroshima, Cerrito... and me.
(beat)
Good things come in threes.

SPRINGER
Well, folks... here's what the world looks like now!

He flips a switch and the world map lights up like a Christmas tree. The huge map is covered with glowing orange lights. The one marked Cerrito is the largest. It glows red.

SPRINGER
We're in good company.

SAM
The great conflagration.

INT. ANOTHER HALLWAY - DAY

TRACKING SHOT on Lisa and Sam as they walk.

LISA
So, can I buy you a little birthday lunch? I'm dying to give you your present.

SAM
I can't, sweetheart. I have to do battle with Mata Hari. She leased out the house just when we had agreed to sell. Bitch!

280

LISA
Sam, will you talk that badly about me after we're married and divorced and I take you to the cleaners, too?

They come to a corner and stop.

SAM
No.
(beat)
Worse.
(He kisses her on the lips)
What'd you get me?

LISA
(excited)
I had Dr. Persons do your chart!

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (5) 26

SAM
(looking towards heaven)
Oy vey...

LISA
(offended)
Don't do that.

SAM
What?

LISA
You know what. That really pisses me off! I went to a lot of trouble to get that done.

SAM
Oh, come on...

LISA
No. I don't make fun of your interests, so I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't make fun of mine.

SAM
Alright, I'm sorry. I know it's a lousy excuse, but I woke up feeling a little sick. I've had a headache all morning.
(He takes out a small bottle and shows it to her. She looks pleased)
Really. I'm looking forward to getting it. What's it say? Is it a good one?

LISA
You're a very lucky man... with a purpose.

280

He stops at the water fountain and washes two pills down. Lisa feels his forehead.

LISA
I think you have a little fever. About a hundred.

Sam gets an impish look in his eye.

SAM
Seeeeeee.
(beat)
Call me after school. I'll let you take me out to dinner for my birthday.

27 EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY 27

Sam walks across the lot towards his vintage 1950 bullet-nosed Studebaker. He notices Jenifer leaning through the window all the way into the car.

SAM
Boo!
(Jennifer jumps, bumping her head on the door frame)
If you're looking for Milt-ton, I don't think you'll find him there.

JENNIFER
I ... uh ...

She turns solid red and runs away. Sam laughs. He opens the door and looks inside. On the seat is a round gift-wrapped box. The size of a small hatbox. Sam smiles. He's dealt with schoolgirl crushes before but he hadn't suspected Jennifer.

He takes off the paper. The box underneath is very old. Its original red color almost completely faded out. He opens it and rummages through the dried out, crumpled tissue paper and finds a second, much smaller box. He opens it and takes out a small felt bag. In it is an antique gold pocketwatch on a gold chain. He can't believe his eyes. How could Jennifer afford something like this?

He looks at the watch. It's beautiful.

INSERT - C.U. WATCH
The crystal looks like it has a fuzzy, negative photo-like Rorshach image of a couple embracing burned into it. It's hard to tell. But we know we've seen this watch before. The hands are stopped at 12:00 and the second hand is not moving. 280

Sam winds the stem and the watch starts to chime the hour. TING - TING - TING. He looks at his own high-tech digital watch, compares the time, and then moves the pocketwatch's hands a few minutes forward to the correct time; 12:10.

He hooks the gold chain to his belt loop, the same place where Brian used to hook it, and sticks the watch in his pocket.

CUT TO:

28 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY 28

Sam walks in and spots RACHEL, his ex-wife, sitting at a table. She is an attractive ex-debutante type. Slightly younger than Sam. There is a MAN with her, but his back is to us. Sam goes over. There are dirty plates on the table.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: 28

SAM
Hi.

The man gets to his feet. He is DR. JOHN MARSH, a very handsome, distinguished man of fifty. He speaks with an almost Etonian accent. He has the detached demeanor of a man who always "has a job to do."

MARSH
Hello, Sam.

He holds out his hand.

SAM
(surprised to see him)
Hello, John.

They shake hands. Marsh holds Sam's hand just a beat too long. He looks at it carefully. Then he looks deeply at Sam's eyes, as if he were examining them.

MARSH
How are you, old man? How do you feel?
(beat)
Migraines still bother you?

Sam pulls his hand away.

SAM
Why do you always do that? You're not my doctor anymore.

MARSH
(fumfering)
Occupational habit.

280

RACHEL
(interrupting)
John and I just bumped into each other.

SAM
(smiling)
Yeah, you used to bump into each other a lot when we were married, too.

Marsh looks very embarrassed.

MARSH
Well, I'll be pushing off...

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2) 28

SAM
Hey, that's okay, man. You two can do whatever the hell you want. We've been divorced two years.

MARSH
Yes, well I really... er ...

Marsh beats a hasty retreat.

RACHEL
(accusingly)
You hate him.

SAM
No I don't. Quite the contrary. He did me a favor.

RACHEL
Charming as ever.

SAM
(Sam is starting to get mad)
Look, I didn't invite him. I mean who brings their...
(he stops himself short)
Okay, never mind.
(imitates Marsh)
Spilt milk, water under the bridge, that sort of rot. What?
(He looks at the table.)
Did you eat already? I thought this was a lunch date.

280

RACHEL
I couldn't wait any longer. And John was hungry, so...

SAM
But, I'm right on time!

RACHEL
Anyway, Grandfather is picking me up any minute. So...

Sam smiles warmly.

SAM
How is the old geezer? I miss him a lot.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (3) 28

RACHEL
He's at the doctor's. Same as always.
(beat)
He asks about you all the time. His little orphan boy.

SAM
(almost tender)
You know, if only you could have taken half as much interest in me as your grandfather, maybe we could have...

RACHEL
Waiter! Could we get a check please.

Sam snaps back to reality.

SAM
Dessert? No, I couldn't possibly squeeze another thing in.

Rachel gets chummy and leans forward.

RACHEL
(catty)
So, how's your new... girlfriend? You've teen together a long time now.

SAM
(brightening)
Yeah. Almost two months. She's a real find. We seem to have a lot in common. No surprises. That's the best part.

RACHEL
Oh, Sam, did you hear about Amy Whittaker?
(beat)
She died last night!

280

SAM
(genuinely shocked)
What! How can that be. I was just with her last week!

RACHEL
Smoking in bed. They say there was nothing left of her.

SAM
But, she told me she quit!

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (4) 28

RACHEL
Well, I guess she must have started again.

SAM
God, I feel so guilty. We had an argument and I got really mad. She was pre-Cerritos.
(beat)
I didn't even have a chance to make peace with her.

WE HEAR A LOUD HORN BLARING.

RACHEL
There's grandfather. Waiter!
(She gets up)
Sam, be a dear and take care of that will you.

Sam can't believe it. He didn't even eat! She leans over and kisses the air near his cheek. She starts to leave, but stops.

RACHEL
Sam! Why don't you come out and say hello to Grandfather. That would make him so happy.

SAM
Alright.

29 EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY 29

A block long CONTINENTAL LIMOUSINE is pulled up in front of the curb. There is an AMBULETTE right behind it. A LIVERIED CHAUFFEUR grabs the door for Rachel. Sam comes over and looks in the window at a sickly looking WHITE HAIRED MAN. He is hooked up to a breathing apparatus and watching television.

280

SAM
(warmly)
Hello, Lew.

The man looks up. His face brightens.

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER
Sam! My boy! I'm so happy to see you. How are you?

SAM
Fine.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER
(concerned)
Headaches?

SAM
(changing the subject)
Hey,you look great!

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER
Liar. I look awful. But, I thank you anyway.
(beat)
Happy Birthday, Sam.

SAM
(looking at Rachel)
Thanks.

RACHEL
Oh yes, Happy Birthday. We have to go... I'm late already...

The grandfather shrugs. "What can I do?" Sam understands. The TV catches his eye.

SAM
Wait a second. I know that guy.

The grandfather leans forward and turns up the volume.

30 ANGLE - TV SCREEN 30

Photo of a middle-aged man.

280

REPORTER
...director of the controversial Cerrito nuclear power plant which, after a ten year battle in the courts, finally comes on line at midnight tonight. Dr. Julian's car was found burning on the 405 Freeway late last.

CUT TO:

31 Shot of SMOLDERING CAR. 31

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

REPORTER
The body was so badly burned that it was only after dental records had been thoroughly examined that its identity could be clearly established.

CUT TO:

SHOT OF A BODY BAG ON A GURNEY BEING WHEELED TOWARDS AN AMBULANCE.

32 INT. LIMO - DAY 32

Rachel leans over and turns off the TV.

RACHEL
We have to go!
(she taps on the partition between her and the driver)
Simon!

The limo pulls away from the curb. Sam is shocked and mad. As always he can't believe how rude she is. He takes out his claim ticket and is about to ask for his car when the MAITRE D' steps outside and fixes Sam with a stare.

MAITRE D'
I hope you haven't forgotten your bill.

SAM
My bill? Shit!

He goes back in the restaurant.

33 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY 280 33

Everything is exactly the same at his table. Nothing has been cleared and the check is not there. Sam is irritated. He rubs his temple.

He looks around for the waiter.... getting more and more irritated. He starts to drum his fingers on the table.

SAM
Waiter! Could I please get the check!?

WAITER
Certainly. You only had to ask.

SAM
I did. Three times!

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: 33

WAITER
(snotty)
Right away... sir.

SAM
Here's a down payment on your tip. Hurry it up, will ya!?

He flips the waiter a quarter. The waiter catches it. It burns his hand and he drops it. He shoots Sam a nasty look. He'll be waiting a while for that check.

The atmosphere in the restaurant is light and there are people laughing and talking. WE MOVE IN on Sam into a FULL SHOT of his drumming fingers.

As the laughter in the room builds his drumming intensifies. WE TILT UP to a C.U. of Sam. His face has become like a tight muscle.

SAM
Waiter!

CUT TO:

34 ANGLE - C.U. FINGERS. 34

The drumming has become quite intense. Suddenly a STROBING BLUR. Sam's left hand. The little finger. The very tip has become a tiny orb of fire-like energy.

CRACK! The finger tip comets to the center of the table and cools down to an impressionistic shell of ash.

Sam is aghast. He jumps to his feet and walks quickly towards the back of the room.

280

35 ANGLE - C.U. TABLE 35

The swizzle stick in Sam's drink has melted.

36 INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY 36

Sam is in a stall with the door locked surveying the damage. He pokes at his finger with the folded corner of his handkerchief. He is sweating and tries hard to keep from throwing up. He finally sits on the toilet.

ANGLE - C.U. FINGER

It looks cauterized. Like fresh scar tissue. There is a slow seeping of plasma. Sam dabs at it with his handkerchief.

37 INT. HIGH SCHOOL NURSE'S OFFICE - DAY 37

The SCHOOL NURSE is looking at Sam's finger incredulously.

NURSE
How did you do this?

SAM
I don't know. It just... burned off.

NURSE
Today's Thursday. Dr. Simpson is here.
I want him to take a look at this.

SAM
Oh, come on, Sarah. Not Dr. Simpson.

NURSE
And why not may I ask?

SAM
(confiding in her)
Two years ago I had a sore throat and
he told me I had to have my tonsils taken
out.

NURSE
So?

SAM
So, I had them out when I was twelve.

The nurse thinks about this for a moment.

NURSE
(sarcastic)
Maybe they grew back.

SAM
Yeah, right.

280

ANGLE - DR. SIMPSON, mid-fifties, is examining Sam. Jennifer comes in the door working hard to look sick. The nurse looks at her and sighs.

NURSE
Jennifer. (facetious) Another headache?
(beat)
Sit down.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

Sam looks at Jennifer and smiles. He pulls the watch half out of his pocket so she can see he's wearing it and winks at her. She blushes again deeply. Sam starts to move towards her and she looks down at the floor to avoid him. She silently slips out the door and down the hall. Sam has to think hard over this. What?? He looks at his watch. Its almost 4:30.

NURSE (V.O)
We go on line at midnight. Isn't that exciting, Sam?

The doctor finishes his exam.

DR.
(to Sam)
I think you'll live. You have a little fever but that should pass.

SAM
Not until I die.

DR.
I beg your pardon.

SAM
My normal temperature's always been a hundred. Got me out of a lot of classes when I was a kid.

DR.
Hmmmmm...
(beat)
Well, I hope you don't think I'm going to send you home for this.

280

SAM
(can't believe what he's hearing)
I beg your pardon.

DR.
You teachers are as bad as the students. Everybody wants a doctor's note. Except you get paid when you're out.

SAM
(peeved)
Dr. Simpson, I don't want to go home. I didn't even...

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2) 37

DR.
(interrupting him)
Do you smoke?

SAM
(getting more irritated)
You already asked me that! I told you. No!

DR.
It looks to me like you burned that finger while you were lighting a cigarette.

SAM
(very mad)
But, I told you I don't smoke!

DR.
You're sure?

SAM
That's it! I'm out of here! I've got a bad enough migrane as it is! In fact, good doctor... I think I <u>will</u> go home!

SAM
(mad and sarcastic)
Thank you, Sarah. Thank you, Dr. Simpson. As always, your help was invaluable!

He facetiously holds out his hand and he and Simpson shake. As their hands touch, there's a bright blue SPARK and a loud CRACK. Sam, the nurse, and Dr. Simpson all jump.

280

SAM
What was that!?

DR.
(flustered)
Just a little... static electricity.

38 INT./EXT. SAM'S CAR - SUNDOWN 38

Sam is driving home. He has a bandage on his finger and avoids letting it touch the steering wheel. He's still upset and is s flipping through the stations on his radio. Music, music, talk, music. He can't find anything he likes. As he turns the dial we pick up snatches of the different programs. He stops instantly as he hears the words:

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: 38

RADIO (V.O.)
...spontaneous combustion...

SAM
(laughing)
Dr. Persons. Too perfect.

He turns the volume up and listens. It is the Dr. Person's show.

PERSONS (V.O.)
Yes, I most certainly have heard of it. In ancient times it was called the Fire From Heaven... until a priest died in the 1800's. How could it be from Heaven, it was asked, if it attacked the clergy?

WOMAN (V.O.)
The reason I ask, is because my husband is a fireman and he says that very often when a person was reported as having died because they were smoking in bed, it was really spontaneous combustion...
(beat)
...but they're not supposed to talk about it.

PERSONS (V.O.)
Mmm-hmmmm...

38A EXT. - ROADWAY BY POWERPLANT - SUNDOWN 38A

We see Sam's POV through the windshield of the enormous grey cooling towers of the Cerrito Power Plant.

280

WOMAN (V.O.)
He says you can always tell when it wasn't a regular fire. The whole body burns except the feet... and sometimes the head. And if there's any plastic in the area it melts. Nothing else, though. Just the plastic.

38B INT./EXT. - SAM'S CAR - SUNDOWN 38B

Sam listens. Fascinated. He notices the red box Jennifer gave him on the seat next to him. There's a yellowing piece of paper peeking out from the folds of tissue paper. He tries to see what it is, but in the dark can't quite make it out.

(CONTINUED)

38 B CONTINUED: (2) 38 B

PERSONS (V.O.)
And what is your question? How may I help you?

WOMAN (V.O.)
Well, there was one last night - the third one he's seen this year - and he says that he's heard it can be contagious. Like a virus or something. I'm worried.

39 EXT. SAM'S DRIVEWAY - SUNDOWN 39

Sam pulls into his driveway and turns off the engine. He continues to listen intensely. He frowns as he presses his temples. His head hurts .

PERSONS (V.O.)
What was this person's name? The one who died last night.

WOMAN (V.O.)
I think it was Whittaker. I wrote it down here somewhere. Amy Whittaker.

Sam is stunned. This is the friend Rachel mentioned.

SAM
Amy. Spontaneous combustion?

PERSONS (V.O.)
When we come back from our news break I will attempt to communicate with her spirit - and we will see exactly what happened.

Sam is obviously shaken. This sounds like some of Lisa's rap, but he still wants to hear it all. He shuts off his radio and heads for his house. 280

40 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 40

Sam, carrying the red box, rushes in the door and turns on the radio. He dials in Dr. Persons on his 1940's RED TUNEMASTER RADIO, but they're still in their news break. There are packing boxes and cartons all over. We can see that Sam is just moving in. The phone rings.

SAM
Hello?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER (V.O.)
(filtered)
Hello, Sam.

SAM
Lew!

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER
(filtered)
Are you alright?

SAM
Of course I am.

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER
(filtered)
Rachel told me you burned your finger. Is it serious? I'm worried.

SAM
Oh, it's nothing. Really. It'll be okay.

In the background we can hear the news winding down. The last story mentions the Cerrito plant going on line in five hours at midnight.

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER
(filtered)
You're sure?

SAM
Positive.

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER 280
(filtered)
All the same, I'd like John Marsh to take a look at it.

SAM
I already saw him once today. That was enough. Look, Lew don't worry. It's okay.

Just then the news ends and Dr. Persons comes back on the air. Sam's attention becomes divided.

PERSONS (V.O.)
I will now attempt to communicate with the recently departed spirit of Amy Whittaker.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2) 40

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER
(filtered)
When am I going to see you? If Mohammed won't come to the mountain, then the mountain will have to come to him. Will you have lunch with me next week?

SAM
Of course I will. I'd love to.

Sam notices the yellowing piece of paper in the box again and absent-mindedly takes it out while keeping one ear tuned to the radio.

RACHEL'S GRANDFATHER
Alright, son. Then I'll see you next week.

SAM
Goodbye, Lew.

Sam hangs up the phone and dashes for the radio. He turns the volume up.

PERSONS (V.O.)
... I'm sorry. I can't seem to reach this spirit at this time. Perhaps she has already been re-incarnated. Or perhaps she is in another galaxy or dimension. Very difficult. I think she must be hiding. A real trickster, this one.

Sam looks upset. He puts down the piece of paper and reaches for the phone and dials a number. An answering machine picks up.

280

SAM
Hi, sweetheart, it's me... the world's greatest actor. Where are you? I thought we were getting together. Give me a ring when you get in. I have to talk to you.

Whistling "Happy Birthday" Sam picks up the yellowed piece of paper and goes over to the fireplace. He turns on the gas and lights the artificial logs. In the background we can still hear Dr. Persons.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (3) 40

He sits down in an armchair and for the first time looks at the paper. It is so old that it is starting to crumble in his hands. It reads:

"FOR MY SON... ON THE DAY OF HIS BIRTH
MAY YOUR LIFE ALWAYS BE A MERRY-GO-ROUND"

Sam can't make heads or tails out of it. His attention is caught by the fire and he starts to stare at the flames. He is still holding the long fireplace match in his hand as he becomes more and more mesmerized by the flames.

41 SAM'S POV - THE FLAMES 41

And then suddenly his vision is floating towards the fire. As we get closer the sound of the fire gets louder reminding us of the noise we heard when Brian and Peggy were in the Samson shelter, riding the nuclear storm.

42 We enter the fire. It surrounds us as we continue shrinking. 42
Through the whirlwinds of gasses we enter a world of moon sized fire molecules. In the din we hear a music wind that we recognize. Sweet and scary singing. Like Peggy's lullaby. A woman? No, a man... and a woman. What language are they speaking? We can't tell.

We're on a collision course with one of the molecules and enter it as it explodes. The vision melts into a series of OPTICALLY ENHANCED IMAGES. Almost like a dream, we dissolve from one to the next:

Colored lights, autumn leaves, a steel rake, warped shadows of animals going up and down, a ball bounces.

FLASH! A circle of light. A head weaves into a C.U. in silhouette. We see a distorted mask, big blinding eyes. 280

The frame is wiped by a black arrow minute hand as we DOLLY OUT of a gold pocket watch. It ticks loudly.

We see the blinding eyes again, like the eyes of a monster coming at us. We pan up to a women's face as the eyes and the face collide and collapse into each other.

We hear, in the wind, a voice calling.

VOICE (V.O.)
David! David Bell!

CUT TO:

43 INT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT 43

Sam is in an almost trance-like state. Sweat streams down his face soaking his collar. He smiles and his lips move, mumbling something. His face becomes pained. He screams.

SAM
I'm burning! I'm burning!

CUT TO:

ANGLE - SAM'S HAND

The long match he's holding is burning his hand. The bandage on his finger catches fire. He jumps to his feet, dropping the note and runs to the bathroom.

SAM
(in pain)
Aieeee, shit!

44 INT. SAM'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 44

Biting his lip, Sam runs water over his hand. He puts ointment on his double burned finger. He mumbles and curses to himself, scared. He is breathing in rapidly. A touch of anger tightens his forehead. He looks at himself in the mirror and sees a Sam he's never seen before. A terror that has never been a part of his life.

45 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 45

While visibly trying to calm himself, Sam calls Lisa's number again.

46 INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 46

Through the window we see the sodium vapor yellow cooling towers of the Cerrito power plant. We hear the phone ring and the camera starts to TRACK across a GLASS CASE which displays hundreds of quartz crystals and amethysts for healing and meditation. Through the glass case we can see a poster on the wall that features Dr. Persons. It is a horoscope that, in large print, spells out LISA - and below - CALL TODAY - 555-7777. It continues past a $300 bouquet of flowers. We see the note: "Thanks for taking care of my boy. Lew".

We hear the machine beep to life.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 46

LISA
(machine)
Hello, this is Lisa. I'm not in right now, but if you'll leave your name and number after the tone I'll get back to you.

We PAN down to her machine. It is on a glass table surrounded by a cluster of crystal shards. The faceted terminations all point up. They seem to glow. We move closer to the machine as Sam starts to talk. He is very angry. He yells.

SAM (V.O.)
(filtered)
I thought we were getting together tonight! Where the hell are you!?

The machine jams as the plastic begins to warp. The little plastic mini-casette buckles and pops out.

SAM
(filtered)
I need you now!!

Her machine goes dead and the phone disconnects. Dial tone.

46A INT. SAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT **46A**

Sam slams down the telephone and storms out of his apartment. Dr. Persons is still talking in the background.

47 EXT. LISA'S BUILDING - NIGHT 47

A frightened Sam screeches to the curb. He gets out and runs towards Lisa's building. He pushes the button over and over again.

280

Then, Lisa is there with packages in her arms. Next to him at the front door.

LISA
Sam. What's the matter?

SAM
Oh, Lisa! Thank God! Where the hell have you been? I've been trying to find you!

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 47

LISA
I told you. I had my self-hypnosis class. Then I stopped back at school. Sam, you wouldn't believe what's going on over there. The place is crawling with police and reporters. Dr. Simpson is dead!

SAM
What? How? What happened?

LISA
He burned to death. I mean completely!

SAM
Oh, no!

LISA
But the weird thing is he was in the shower - in the gym - with the water running!

SAM
Spontaneous human combustion!

LISA
Yes. That's what one of the reporters called it. SHC. He said it happens all the time.
(beat)
Sam, you look like you've seen a ghost.

SAM
I don't know. Maybe I did!

280

48 INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 48

Lisa is opening one of the packages she was carrying.

LISA
Sweetheart, you can't let yourself get so upset. Lots of people have experiences like this. I've had them. You have to be open.

SAM
This wasn't the same! I've seen those images before. In dreams. But, this time it wasn't a dream. It was real! And, and my finger... it must be ... SHC!

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: 48

LISA
We're going to call Dr. Persons in just one minute. He's on until 8:30.
(Sam makes a face)
Look.

She finishes opening the box and holds it in front of him. It's a birthday cake with thirty-four candles.

LISA
Happy birthday, sweetheart.

Sam tries to smile but he's too agitated. He paces up and down the room. He takes out his pocket watch and starts to wind the stem nervously. Lisa notices. She's never seen this watch before. Sam stops and looks at the flowers, at the card. He's surprised.

SAM
What's this?

LISA
(flustered)
Nothing.

SAM
I didn't know you knew Lew.

LISA
I... uh...

SAM
What gives?

LISA
(smiling coquettishly)
I'm into older men... alright?

280

She changes the subject by reaching over and switching on the radio. Sam is confused.

PERSONS (V.O.)
... that subject we'll discuss tomorrow night. But, before I go... I'd like to thank you all for your support and remember... I am here to answer all of your questions about the para-normal. Just call 555-7777. How may I help you?

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (2) 48

LISA
(she looks at her watch)
Oh, shoot!
(she dials the number as fast as she can)
Let me speak to Dr. Persons. It's an emergency.
(beat)
No, it can't wait. Now listen, I happen to be a supporter. I sent in thirty dollars and I have to speak with him now!

Sam paces back and forth getting more and more upset.

SAM
I'm not doing this...

PERSONS (V.O.)
This is Dr. Persons. How may I help you?

Sam is almost frantic at this point. Lisa hands him the phone.

LISA
Tell him.

SAM
No!

LISA
Sam! Please. He can help!

He takes the phone reluctantly and puts it to his ear... and then it all just pours out.

SAM
(out of control)
Something is happening to me! It started today! My birthday. I'm thirty-four.

280

PERSONS (V.O.)
Please, you must calm yourself. I sense danger. Terrible danger.

SAM
I never knew my parents. But, I saw them! I left my body and saw them!

PERSONS (V.O.)
Just one moment... just a moment... There is a woman. She is singing.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (3) 48

SAM
(his heart almost stops)
I think my mother's name is Peggy. I don't know how I know that, but I do!

PERSONS (V.O.)
She sang to you... when you were a little baby...

SAM
Yes, I remember! Save the world. I'm to use my gift!

PERSONS (V.O.)
Who are you, young man? What is your name?

SAM
David Bell...
(beat)
Oh my God!

He looks at his hand.

ANGLE - SAM'S HAND

The birthmark has doubled in size. We see it slowly expanding.

SAM
I have a birthmark on my hand! Oh no! It's twice the size its been all my life! Its growing!

Sam drops the phone in horror. Lisa can't believe what she's seeing.

280

LISA
Sit down! I'll get some ointment!

Sam is desperate. He sits down in the chair in front of Lisa's fireplace. He starts to look at the flames. When he realizes what he's doing, he looks away. But then, unable to stop himself, he stares into the fire again. His body struggles as his consciousness glides towards the whispers in the flames. Lisa comes back in the room just in time.

LISA
Sam!

She runs over to him and violently shakes his shoulders until he snaps out of it.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (4) 48

On the radio Dr. Persons is just about to say goodnight when a call comes in. An elderly woman with a refined German accent.

WOMAN (V.O.)
If the young man who called before is still listening, the one with the birthmark, he must call me, call the station immediately! I knew his parents. Brian and Peggy. He may be experiencing some... changes!

Sam grabs for the phone. He dials as fast as he can.

PERSONS (V.O)
Yes, I can see now. The singing lady... yes, they knew you. She is crying now. Much horror. Much happiness. This force is so very strong.

SAM
Pick up! Pick up!

PERSONS (V.O.)
But, now we must go. If the young man is listening we hope he will call back next week between 5:00 and 8:30. And we hope that all of you good listeners will be back at that time, too. Until then I bid you good evening.

SAM
No! Pick up, you mind reading son of a bitch!

He's getting tremendously agitated. Lisa tries to calm him down. The phone keeps ringing, then someone picks up.

280

GRAVEL VOICE (V.O.)
(incredibly slow)
W...K...T...O...

SAM
Yes, Dr. Persons, it's me! The one the lady was talking about!

GRAVEL VOICE (V.O.)
That program's off the air now. You'll have to call back next week.

SAM
Is he there? It's an emergency. I have to get to him!

49 INT. RADIO STATION - NIGHT 49

A TECHNICIAN with a Twinky in one hand, a soldering iron in the other and the phone cradled in the crook of his neck tries to talk with Sam as he works on a circuit board. He has a couple of wires clenched in his teeth.

TECHNICIAN
(impatiently)
Call back next week at 5:00.

The technician is watching Persons in the booth through a sound-proof, glass window. Persons is still talking on the phone to the woman caller. He is animated.

TECHNICIAN
Besides, his phone is still lit up busy.

SAM (V.O.)
I'll hold.

The technician tries to juggle the wires the Twinkie and the soldering iron and winds up touching his finger with the hot iron.

TECHNICIAN
Shit!
(he gets very nasty)
Look, I'm not responsible for chasing down folks for personal calls!

50 INT. LISA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 50

SAM
Listen, please, can you take down a message and give it to him before he leaves?

280

TECHNICIAN (V.O.)
No!

Sam's face is red with anger. Over his shoulder we see the candles on his birthday cake ignite brightly.

SAM
(losing it)
Listen, you idiot! This may not be as important as your lousy snack or whatever you... you...

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: 50

He is twisting the phone in his hand. It looks like he's trying to pull it apart. He hurls a crystal paper weight at the fireplace so hard a log breaks. A belch of gas flame bursts from the fireplace. Lisa jumps back.

LISA
Look out!

51 INT. RADIO STATION - NIGHT 51

The technician, cheeks swollen like a chipmunk, jerks the phone away from his head. He sticks a finger in his deafened ear.

51A -ANGLE - C.U. of the technician's phone as it WARPS. 51A

There is a loud WHOOOOSH of energy drawn into the Twinkie from all around. It combusts in the cursing technician's hand. Bits of chewed, fizzing Twinkie erupt from his mouth. They are sizzling and burning. His mouth and nose look like a roman candle, rocketing green and blue chunks of molten creme filling.

52 INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 52

Sam's eyes roll up in his head as if hit by an epileptic seizure. We see a blister the size of an egg on his left forearm. It explodes blowing a 3 ft. jet of green flame out of his arm. He and Lisa both scream. Sam in pain. Lisa in terror.

53 INT. RADIO STATION - NIGHT 53

ANGLE - The screaming technician bashes back and forth in the small sound-proof room. His knee cap blows out with a jet of fire. He collapses down on all fours swaying and squealing. The sound of spontaneous human combustion. High pitched and sickening.

280

We PAN UP with the escaping of black smoke from burning fat. The greasy smoke thins and we are looking through the glass window. We can see Dr. Persons as he exits through a steel door that is marked "stairs-exit." He didn't see a thing.

ANGLE - The closed, locked exit door glows bright from the reactive light of the burning technician.

54 EXT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 54

We hear Sam screaming. We DOLLY urgently up to a window.

ANGLE - Through the window we see down a hallway. Firelight and shadows play on the wall of the hall.

55 INT. LISA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 55

Lisa is blasting a CO-2 fire extinguisher on Sam's burning arm. She triggers it again and again, but the fire won't go out. The bathtub is filling. Lisa puts his arm under water. It continues to burn like a rocket under water.

SAM
(screaming)
Oh, God! No! Oh, God! Please!

Sam looks at the jet of flame under water - bubbling. All of the plastic in the bathroom start to melt.

56 C.U. SAM 56

Sam's eyes fix on the flame and his attention locks. Far away in the lonely distance we hear that strange, sweet, singing wind. His P.O.V. drifts towards the fire. It goes through the water, enters the flame and continues into the atomic make-up of fire. Back to the moon size molecules exploding - and the singing, sweet singing. In this other dimension we forget the panic. We enter the nucleus of a fire molecule.

LISA (V.O.)
Sam! Sam! Stop!

57 ANGLE - SAM HUNCHED DOWN OVER THE BATHTUB 57

His head rests against the wall. His arm under the water.

Sam's eyes pop open. He gasps and fights for air. He tries to stand but slips and falls. The plastic soles of his shoes have melted. They slip and squeak as he struggles to get up.

57A ANGLE - MEDICINE CABINET MIRROR 57A

Sam looks at himself. He is pasty white. It's impossible! What is happening to him?

SAM
Am I dying? Oh, God, God.

LISA
It's alright, sweetheart, it's alright...

SAM
Lisa, I saw my mother and father! They were trying to tell me something!

They call up the courage to look at his arm. There is a golf ball sized section of left forearm seared and gone. His motor function is impaired. He tests his left hand. Not doing too well. Lisa is crying.

58 INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT 58

Sam is completely frantic as Lisa drives as fast as she can. He has a white cloth wrapped around his arm.

SAM
It's true! I know it!

LISA
PLease, Sam.

SAM
First Amy Whittaker and then Dr. Simpson... and I was with them both! They burned to death! Spontaneous combustion!
(beat)
SHC! I caught it from them! Whatever it is, I've got it now, too!

LISA
(trying to calm him)
No you don't!

SAM
Look at me! I'm burning up!

Lisa bursts into tears.

LISA
Oh God, Sam... it's just like your parents!

SAM
What are you talking about?

280

LISA
It's alright. I know how you feel. My parents burned to death, too.

SAM
My parents didn't burn! They drowned!

Lisa looks like she understands why he should make something like this up. Sam gets mad

SAM (CONT.)
Where did you get an idea like that!?

Lisa tries to change the subject.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: 58

LISA
I don't know. I thought I heard it somewhere.

SAM
From who? Who would say something like that?

LISA
Lew.

SAM
What is this with Lew? I don't get it. How do you know him?

LISA
I've known him all my life. He's taken care of me since my parents died too. That's how I know about yours.
(beat)
We owe him everything. If it wasn't for him we wouldn't even know each other.

SAM
What!

LISA
Ohhh... I'm so embarrassed. He set the whole thing up. He got me my job at school just so we'd meet.

Sam is getting very agitated.

280

SAM
I don't believe this!

LISA
I didn't even know at first.

SAM
Why didn't you tell me!?

LISA
I wanted to, but he said you'd be upset... so I went along with it.
(she looks at him anxiously)
I'm sorry if it was wrong. I love you, Sam.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (2) 58

She reaches to touch him and WHOOSH! Sam's left arm re-ignites. They are both freaked out. Lisa tries to maintain control of the car while trying to beat out the fire on Sam's hand with her coat. All around them the plastic is starting to get hot and sag. The car swerves precariously as the steering wheel begins to melt and become almost useless.

59 EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT 59

Almost out of control, the car turns into the driveway of the hospital. It skids to a stop in front of the emergency room. They leave the car parked on a diagonal in front and run in the door.

60 INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT 60

Sam and Lisa are in a state of panic as they run towards the desk. Sam is desperate. Nobody seems to know what to do. His hand is burning and they can't make it stop.

PARAMEDICS AND TECHNICIANS are descending from all over. They've never seen anything like this before. Everyone is offering an opinion. They beat Sam's arm with blankets and spray it with fire extinguishers, but nothing seems to work. Other patients in the waiting area watch in horror.

Sam's look turns from one of sheer terror to one of dazed resignation... and back to terror again.

Then John Marsh is there. He reaches for the wet cloths that are now wrapped around Sam's arm, but thinks better of it.

MARSH
Could you remove those, please. 280

At first it doesn't even look as if Sam understands what anybody is saying. But, then he weakly unwraps the cloths. When Marsh sees the wound his face goes white. He controls his reaction, however.

MARSH.
(to nurse at desk))
Would you please page Dr. Cagney. Tell him I'd like to see him in my office immediately.
(beat)
Come this way, Sam.
(Lisa falls in with them)
I'd appreciate it if you'd wait here.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: 60

LISA
No! I want to come!

MARSH
Please. It's best if you wait here.
(under his breath)
I should think you of all people would know that.

Lisa looks at him strangely. She doesn't know what the hell he's talking about. She doesn't even know this man.

LISA
(adamantly)
I'm coming.

61 INT. JOHN MARSH'S EXAMINING ROOM - NIGHT 61

Sam, tremendously agitated, is sitting in a chair. Lisa stands at his side. Marsh puts on a pair of rubber gloves and a mask. He starts to come over to Sam but then stops and puts on a pair of rubber goggles, too.

Marsh performs a couple of routine examinations on Sam. Routine, except for the fact that he carefully avoids touching him at all. He looks down Sam's throat and checks his eyes and ears. He then gets a small hand-held machine and runs the small wand that is attached to it over Sam's arm. It ticks as it approaches Sam's wound.

SAM
What's that?

280

MARSH
Nothing. Just hold still, Sam.

He takes a scraping of skin tissue from the area of Sam's wound, puts it in a glass tube and then draws some blood. He puts both test tubes in a small lead container which he labels with Sam's name.

MARSH
Are you taking any medication?

SAM
No.

LISA
Yes. He's taking some pills I gave him for his headaches... but, they're not really medicine. They're homeopathic. For migranes.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 61

MARSH
Do you have them with you?

SAM
Yes.

MARSH
May I see them please?

Sam takes the bottle out of his pocket and hands it to Marsh.

MARSH
Will you excuse me one second?

Marsh goes into him private office.

FROM SAM'S P.O.V. we see him sit down at his desk and pick up the phone. Marsh notices Sam watching and reaches over and closes the door. We hear muffled conversation as he talks on the phone.

MARSH (O.S.)
No, sir. I disagree!
(beat)
It is SHC. What difference if it takes twenty- four seconds or twenty-four hours!? The result is still the same.
(beat)
I'll handle this my way.
(beat)
It's time this project was ended.

Marsh opens the door and comes back into the room with another MAN. From Sam's P.O.V. we see that there is a large file on Marsh's desk that was not there before.

280

Marsh sees Sam notice the file. He goes back in the office and puts the file in his desk. He comes back into the other room, closing the door behind him. Sam is crazed, but controls himself.

SAM
What the hell is going on!? Who were you talking to!?
(beat)
What's in that file!?

MARSH
Sam, you know Dr. Cagney, don't you?

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (2) 61

SAM
(containing himself)
Yes, but ...

CAGNEY
(best bedside manner)
Of course he does. I believe we've even eighteen-holed it a few times. We're old friends, aren't we, Sam?

MARSH
I've asked him to look after you. I have an important ... appointment I'm late for.

SAM
But ... Marsh ... I want you to ...

MARSH
(giving Sam a wink)
Don't worry, you're in good hands.

Marsh takes Cagney over to the side and gives him some last minute instructions. Sam tries to hear what their talking about but can't. He painfully takes his pocket watch out and winds the stem. The time reads 9:57.

CAGNEY
(nodding)
I understand.

MARSH
Lisa, you'll have to come with me. 280

LISA
But . . .

MARSH
(getting more forceful)
I'm afraid I'll have to insist.

He takes her by the arm and leads her out the door as Cagney goes over to a table and picks up some instruments.

CAGNEY
Make yourself comfortable, Sam. I won't be a minute.

Cagney goes back into the private office.

62 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT 62

Still holding her by the arm Marsh leads Lisa towards the other end of the hall. He turns a corner and takes her into a small waiting area and sits down with her. There are a few other PEOPLE looking at magazines and watching the television which is turned on to the news.

MARSH
We'll wait here...

LISA
But...

MARSH
Do you mind if I ask you a question. (beat) Just how well do you know . . . Samson?

LISA
Very well.
(she smiles)
I'm his Delilah.

Marsh smiles politely. Does she really not know what he's talking about, or is she just being coy.

MARSH
Have your migraines gotten worse?

She looks at him strangely, not answering. How would he know about her headaches.

MARSH
Those pills you gave Sam . . . Do you take them as well?

280

LISA
(cautiously)
Yes . . .

Marsh shifts in his seat. He seems to move a little further away from her. They both fall awkwardly silent and turn to look at the TV.

REPORTER (V.O.)
... all over the area. According to the fire department, this has been the highest recorded one day total of unexplained deaths by fire this decade.

63 INT. MARSH'S EXAMINING ROOM - NIGHT 63

Sam's watch is chiming in his pocket. 10:00. Then he looks at the TV and flinches as though shocked. He senses something. Almost as if he's received a communication. He turns on the television.

REPORTER (CONT.)
Only two hours ago noted radio para-psychologist Myron Gold of Laguna Beach, better known as Dr. Persons, narrowly escaped death when he was trapped in a stairwell at WKTO while a technician, Brad Wilson, burned to death before his eyes...

Sam's eyes have gone wild. His world is crashing inexorably beyond the point of no return. He grabs the telephone and punches out three digits.

VOICE
(filtered)
Information. What city please?

SAM
(almost incoherent)
Yes, I need to speak to Dr. Persons... to Myron Gold... yes!! Laguna Beach...

He dials and waits for someone to answer.

PERSONS
(filtered)
Hello.

SAM
(frantically)
I have to speak to the woman who called!

280

64 INT. MARSH'S PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT 64

We can see Cagney's shadow as we hear metallic clicks. We see two shadowy hands loading a syringe with radioactive isotopes.

65 INT. MARSH'S EXAMINING ROOM - NIGHT 65

As Sam hangs up the phone the door to the private room opens and Cagney comes back in. Sam is stunned when he sees him. He is wearing a full radioactive suit. In his heavy gloves he is carrying a large hypodermic needle.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

CAGNEY
Roll up your other sleeve, Sam. I'm going to give you a shot.

SAM
No! What is that!?

CAGNEY
Please, Sam. This is very important. It will lower your fever.

SAM
I don't want a shot! I want to see that file!

CAGNEY
Please, Sam. This will only take a second. Then we'll talk.

Sam gets up and starts for the office. Marsh is about to reach to grab him, but stops himself just short of touching Sam.

CAGNEY
You can't go in there! It's none of your business.

He raises the hypo like a knife with his thumb on the plunger and tries to stab Sam. A drop of isotope falls onto a folder on the desk. We see a cigarette-like burn start to spread.

Cagney's radioactive suit is clumsy and he fumbles. Sam catches his wrist and goes wild. His hand starts to burn again and he screams in pain. His burning hand is locked around Cagney's wrist.

280

CAGNEY
(pleading)
Please, Sam. Don't make this more difficult than it is. I have to give you this injection!

SAM
You're trying to kill me!

Sam, pale and sweating, takes the hypo away and drags Cagney towards the desk in the private office.

Sam's temperature rises higher. His eyes are blood red. He is soaked with sweat. He falls to his knees, dead weight, clamped to Cagney's wrist. Cagney's glove falls off.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2) 65

Cagney is pulled to his knees as Sam goes into spasms. He wheezes loudly trying to suck air.

Suddenly, with a rush of adrenaline, a second wind, Sam is on his feet. Cagney has no choice but to follow. The fabric of his radioactive suit is starting to smolder where Sam is gripping it. Cagney screams.

SAM
Let's see that file, my eighteen-hole friend!

He drags Cagney into the other room.

66 INT. MARSH'S PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT 66

CAGNEY
Please, Kramer! Let me go! I have nothing to do with this!

SAM
No. You're just the executioner.

Sam takes out the file and opens it up.

SAM'S P.O.V. - C.U. of the FILE as he turns the pages. We see reams of old documents that refer to him. there are photographs of Sam from all stages of his life.

SAM
These charts go back to when I was a kid!! I didn't even know Marsh until I was in college. How did he get these!?

CAGNEY
I don't know!

280

SAM
You're lying!

CAGNEY
They should have flushed you when they had the chance! You're a freak!

Cagney's fist is starting to turn blue. Sam grips it harder. He gets madder and crazier. His face is contorted. One of Cagney's blue knuckles spits a squirt of blue flame. Cagney screams.

Sam flips his sweat drenched hair, flinging sweat in Cagney's face. Cagney keeps looking at the hypo Sam is still holding.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 66

Sam takes out two other files from the desk. They are similar to the one on Sam. The subjects are Lisa and Jennifer.

SAM
Lisa? Why do you have a file on Lisa? And Jennifer!?
(beat)
Cagney! Tell me! I have to know!

Cagney breaks free from Sam's grip and runs into the other room. He takes a gun out of a drawer, but Sam is right there.

He hits Cagney and sends him reeling across the room. He falls into a table knocking medical equipment all over.

Then the fire runs up Sam's arm to his shoulder. His arm gives out and a jet of green fire shoots out of his shoulder joint.

Cagney watches, horrified and in awe at the same time.

67 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT 67

Marsh is still holding Lisa captive with polite talk. She looks anxiously at her watch.

LISA
What's taking so long?

MARSH
Don't worry. It will all be over shortly.

Lisa looks at him. She doesn't like the tone of his voice. She stands up and starts to walk briskly down the hall.

MARSH 280
Lisa! No! Come back here!

She doesn't pay any attention. She turns the corner and walks even more quickly towards the office. Marsh hurries after her.

MARSH
Lisa, please, I must ask you to...

68 INT. MARSH'S PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT 68

He reaches for her just as she opens the door to the office. She gasps. The room is in disarray. Cagney is slowly staggering to his feet. Sam is gone.

69 EXT. NINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 69

Sam's bullet-nose Studebaker pulls up. He sits in his car for a few moments looking at a house on the other side of the street. His wounds are re-bandaged and he is in terrible pain. He takes a few deep breaths, then opens the door and gets out.

70 ANGLE - SAM'S P.O.V. 70

The camera TRACKS towards the house as Sam goes to the front door. His pain causes him to move with difficulty. He rings the bell and after a moment it is answered by Nina, who we recognize as an older version of the small, energetic German woman we saw in the beginning of the film. She is shocked and frightened when she first sees him. He's really a mess. His arm and shoulder are wrapped with cloths and his face is very haggard. She winces at his condition. She takes his right hand and looks at the birthmark. She looks at him suspiciously.

NINA
(German accent)
You're... Sam?

SAM
Yes.

NINA
I was told you died when you were eleven. That's not your real name, you know.
(she starts to smile, but then stops herself)
I have to take your thumbprint. to be sure.

CUT TO:

280

71 ANGLE - INK PAD 71

THUMP. Sam's thumb is pressed onto the pad.

CUT TO:

72 ANGLE - CLOSE ON AN OLD BIRTH CERTIFICATE 72
with a thumbprint and footprint on it.

73 INT. NINA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 73

Nina examines the prints with a magnifying glass and finally allows herself to smile at Sam. There is genuine love in her eyes. She is concerned about his condition and her face turns tough with worry.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 73

NINA
Oh, David... Sam. What have they done to you!?

She takes his hand and leads him out of the room.

74 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 74

There is soapy water in the sink, and bottles of medicines and rolls of bandages in front of them. Nina treats Sam's wounds as she tells him about the details of his history. Sam looks confused and exhausted. Too much information. Too fast.

SAM
Project Samson?

NINA
Yes. The Samson Anti-Radiation Project. That's where your name came from. They changed it from David after your parents died.

SAM
(incredulously)
So, you're saying they knew all along this bomb shelter wouldn't protect them from the radiation.

NINA
Radient energy we called it back then. No, Sam. Not at that distance. Only the blast. That was the whole point. To test the anti-radiation drug. It was administered every day for months before the explosion ... to build up tolerance to atom-sized particles of thermites in the blood stream.

280

SAM
But, didn't they tell them what was going on?

NINA
(looking away)
More or less.
(beat)
Sam, they were the happiest couple. Peggy said they had the luck of the Irish.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: 74

SAM
For a house in Phoenix and $10,000!?

Nina finishes her first aid. She walks out of the kitchen.

74A INT. NINA'S HALLWAY - NIGHT 74A

Sam follows. He grabs her by the shoulder.

SAM
No! You're lying!

NINA
Sam, it wasn't supposed to be that way! They were to be totally protected! They were hooked up to machines that pulsed coded messages to the vaccine to amplify its effects. It had been tested on animals for two years!

SAM
Come on! How could they have died the day I was born!? I have memories of them. I still dream about them. I went to my grandfather's funeral with them. So, I had to be at least two or three!

NINA
(patiently)
No, Sam. You're grandfather died before you were born. While your mother was pregnant. I know. I was there. I went to the funeral with them.

280

Sam doesn't want to hear anymore. He's overloading.

SAM
I think you're crazy! I'm upside down! My whole life is nothing but betrayal and treachery! How do I even know you knew my parents!

Nina looks deep into Sam's eyes and with a gentle, kind of motherly love, takes his hand.

NINA
Come.

75 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 75

Nina goes to a closet and pulls a medium sized steamer trunk out. She takes out an ancient 8MM projector and starts setting it up.

NINA
The trunk belongs to you, Sam. These things were your mother's and father's...and yours.

While Sam looks through the trunk, Nina sets up a screen and threads the projector. He looks at some papers and photographs, handling them like the precious relics of the past they are. He takes out the carrousel and touches it gently. He winds the key on its base.

NINA
Come sit down here, dear. I want you to see this. With me.

Nina switches the projector on as Sam's carrousel turns and plays music that rings in his soul.

76 GRAINY 8MM KODACHROME HOME MOVIE - 50'S FOOTAGE OF BRIAN, PEGGGY 76

The film is in amazingly good condition. The white wooden house and yard. Peggy is holding a chrome electric toaster with the cord looped over her shoulder. The toaster is tilted and catches the sunlight. It flashes the frame with a blinding orb.

76A -Hand held bright light bar is Brian behind the camera and shooting into a mirror photographing himself. The two photofloods spread out from the camera in the middle. They resemble the two huge glowing eyes of a monster. After a beat we can make out a faint image of pregnant Peggy through the veil of halation from the lamps. The camera PANS to gift wrapped packages. It is a birthday party for Brian. The camera whips around and we see an over-exposed C.U. of an out of focus, younger Nina. She is holding a ball, shaking it. It is a most strange and unusual ball. A gift. A large rubber simulation of an atom. An atom ball. 76A

280

C.U. of Nina smiling warmly. She is joined by Peggy. They walk over to their new bullet-nose Studebaker. They goof and wave at the camera. They are waving from the past.

Black leader comes on as the film runs out.

SAM
My car! God! I even have a car just like that!

77 INT. NINA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 77

Sam is stunned. At first he tries to hold it back, but then can't. He starts to cry. A lifetime of pent-up frustration and confusion lets itself out and he sobs uncontrollably. Nina puts her arm around his shoulder and comforts him. She smiles, but we can see tears welling up in her eyes. The carrousel runs down and the little animals rest again.

SAM
I know those images. They've been in my dreams all my life. I... I thought it was a monster. It was my father!

NINA
Sam, Sam... ssshh... dear boy...
(she strokes his hair and starts to cry, too)
Your mother was my best friend. I loved them both so much. When you were born I was there. I watched them clean you up and test you for the radiant energy. I took you in for your first breast feeding.. and then... then...
(She can't go on. Sam makes her)
... and then they were... just consumed!

They both continue to cry until they are finally able to get themselves under control. Nina wipes her eyes with her handkerchief and gets up. She hands a box of Kleenex to Sam. She walks around the room for a few moments to get her composure.

NINA
After what happened to your parents they were sure you would be like a human time bomb. So they waited and watched. They were always there. In every foster home, every school. But, when you were eleven, they told me you died of influenza and they closed down the whole project.

280

SAM
(forcing a laugh)
Well, the reports of my death were greatly exaggerated.
(beat)
At least then.

NINA
But, where were you? Tell me about yourself. What happened?

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

SAM
When I was twelve I was sent from Tucson to a boarding school in Long Beach. Then my life changed. I was assigned an alumni sponsor who turned out to be the greatest. He took me under his wing and virtually became a father to me. don't think I'd have ever made it without him! I've been very lucky.

NINA
That's wonderful.

SAM
He took me into his family as if I were one of his own. After Stamford, his granddaughter Rachel and I got married - although when I look back I don't really know why. Maybe we were both just trying to please Lew. He really wanted it.

NINA
So, you're married?

SAM
Divorced...
(beat)
... thank God. Because, now I'm in love with a really wonderful woman. And, this one will work.

NINA
What's her name?

SAM
Lisa.

280

78 OMITTED 78

79 ANGLE - NINA 79

NINA
I'm so glad.

SAM
Nina. I don't think the project's over!

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: 79

NINA
(shaking her head)
No, Sam. It's over. The project started up over forty years ago. Most of the people who worked on it have long since died.

SAM
But, they're watching me! Someone is! There are files!

NINA
But, Sam. There's no one to watch. No one's interested anymore. Certainly not the government. Certainly not United Technologies.

SAM
(surprised)
United Technologies?

NINA
Yes, they had the contracts on the bomb and the shelter. If I'm not mistaken, they may have even produced the anti-radiation drug, as well.

SAM
(stunned)
But, that's Lew's company.

NINA
Lew?

SAM
Rachel's grandfather!
(beat)
My benefactor!

280

NINA
(understanding)
Olander.

SAM
Yes!

Now it all starts to come together and Sam is turning red. There's no way of telling what might happen. Nina tries to calm him down.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: (2) 79

We hear the TING - TING of Sam's watch as it starts to chime. He takes it out of his pocket and nervously twists the stem. It's 11:00.

SAM
I have to go! I can't stay here anymore!

Nina looks shocked.

NINA
Where did you get that watch!? That was your father's.

SAM
What? One of my students gave it to me!

NINA
Look here! This image was seared on the crystal by the flash when they ...
(beat)
Yes. This is your father's watch.

SAM
No!

NINA
Please, Sam. Sit down. We must talk

SAM
No! I have to go!

NINA
Sam, Let me help you. I'm a canny old bird. I know...

He breaks away from her and storms through the door. 280

NINA
Sam! Come back!

80 EXT. NINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 80

Sam half runs, half staggers to his car and gets in. As he peels off down the street, we see that there was a MAN in a car watching him. As Sam turns the corner the man gets out of his car and walks towards Nina's house.

81 INT. NINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 81

The doorbell rings and Nina looks up and smiles. He's come back for the film. He's calmed down.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: 81

She goes to the door and opens it. PFZZZZZZ! The man, wearing a gas mask, sprays an aerosol directly at her and she staggers back clutching her face. The mist from the cannister settles and the man steps under the light and whips off the gas mask. Dr. Marsh. He pushes Nina out of his way and she bounces off the wall and crumbles to the floor.

MARSH
Silly, old bitch! You got the DX sanction ten years ago. What happened? Did Mr. Lullaby visit the wrong old lady?

Marsh goes into the living room and collects all of the photographs, film and documents from the trunk.

MARSH
This is ridiculous. I'll spend the rest of my life tying up loose ends!

Nina drags herself to her desk and tries to write a note. "Sam, you were right. John Marsh was..." She collapses.

Marsh steps over Nina as he leaves. But, not before taking the note.

82 EXT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT 82

Sam is really crazed. He's talking to himself as he turns the dial on the radio looking for something, anything, nothing. We hear a late night holy roller preaching hellfire and damnation.

SAM
God. I wonder if I have a God? Child of mutilation and pig of deception. My entire life... control! I can't even tell anyone... no one would believe... too fantastic... is it just me? Or is it total control? Do they think I'm a fool? Do they think I don't know I have a mission!?
(beat)
Yes. I will. I'll use my gift!

280

On a deserted country road he spots a PHONE BOOTH and, tires squealing, pulls over.

83 INT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT 83

He punches out a number.

SAM
Lisa... Lisa! Where the hell are you!?

84 INT. LISA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 84

Lisa is pacing up and down. She's obviously been crying. She starts when the phone rings.

LISA
Hello.

SAM
(filtered)
Lisa, I...

LISA
Sam! Thank God! Are you alright?

SAM
(filtered)
Oh, Lisa, Lisa, I have to tell you...

LISA
Where are you? I'll come to you, Sam...

SAM
(filtered)
I... my name... I have to talk... I'm not Sam... I'm the child of Samson... a thermo nuclear bomb. I'm David... the Apocalyptic death man!

LISA
You're not going to die! Sam, I know what happened to you. I spoke with the doctor. He's dealt with spontaneous human combustion before. Sam, has it happened again? The fire?

85 INT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT 85

SAM
No, thank God! Lisa I want you to be safe. We've made the earth sick. There's a virus that is draining the life out of her. There are unnatural atomic blisters on her skin. And there's a temperature. Where there's infection!

280

LISA
(filtered)
Sam, listen, because this is very important. The doctor can save your life. The fire won't start again. Keep away from live fire. Matches. You don't smoke. Don't start the car again.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED: 85

SAM
Listen, Lisa, I'm... it's...

LISA
(filtered)
Sam, it's like lightening striking the same place twice. The chances are...

SAM
I'm its mascot. Spontaneous combustion. Write this down. 1412 Alameda Street. Don't be confused...

86 INT. LISA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 86

LISA
1412 Alameda Street.
(She writes it down)
What is that? Is that where you are?
(beat)
Wait there. I'll call Dr. Marsh. There's an insulated van. He can...

87 INT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT 87

SAM
John Marsh? Doctor? He's a fucking killer! And he's after you, too! I saw the files! Lots of files! He'll try and give you an injection, too ... unless... my God! If you're in on my kill... then fuck you!
(the rage is starting to take over again)
If you are, then you better run for your life!

LISA
(filtered, crying)
I love you, Sam.

SAM
I'm not very stable right now. Nuclear power ... is death. But... if the old man set me up with Rachel, then with you ... what part of SAMSON do you serve!? What did you do to me!? Did you do something that started this fire!?

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: 87

LISA
(filtered)
No!!

SAM
(crazed)
What was in those pills you gave me!?

LISA
(filtered)
Nothing! I don't know!

SAM
Where did you get them!?

LISA
(filtered, crying)
He said you wouldn't take them for him. That I'd have to make you. He was worried about you!

SAM
Who!?

LISA
(filtered)
Lew.

SAM
LISAAAAAAIIEE!

88 INT. LISA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 88

280

ZZEEEEEE. She **jerks** the receiver away from her head. FLASH! A blast of luminescent green fire shaped like boney, finger-talons shoots out of the receiver and into a mirror. It reflects back out and grabs Lisa by the throat. She is beyond terror and unable to scream. The electron fire taloned fingers grip her throat, BUZZZZZZZZ loud and ZAP into cobweb strands of green glowing vapor and dissipate leaving red fingerprints on her throat.

ANGLE - LISA
looking everywhere as the threads of smoke dissipate. Thank God it's over. She is holding the receiver at arm's length.

89 EXT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT 89

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED: 89

WIDE SHOT - We DOLLY IN cautiously. Sam roars with sounds of agony. His back is to us. A cloud of back-lit smoke behind him grows like a billowing flower opening. Sam talks on the phone over trying to deal with the pain.

SAM
(hands up to head)
Oh, God, I, I, Oh, God, pain, pain go away, come again some other day.
(he tries to laugh)
IIIIIEEEEEEE ... my head, Lisa! I got so mad! Killing mad. I can't stop thinking about my experimental life. AAAAHH! This is what my life is. An atomic joke. Yesterday I was the luckiest man in the world and today... my birthday... for Christ's sake! I keep seeing things. I don't know whether I'm asleep or dead. My head is... coming... a..a..apart!
(he laughs half hysterically)
Oh God, I see your living room!

CUT TO:

90 INT. LISA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 90

SAM
(filtered)
Oh, here comes the pain... AAA... I get these blasts of anger. It's worse everytime.
(he cries)
If it gets any worse ... it almost killed me this time. I see your leg... I see you in the mirror. an... aan... and now I can see the floor. I see your feet. It's like I'm in your head. Seeing from your eyes. Pain go away!

280

CUT TO:

Lisa looks at herself in a mirror. Her focus shifts to her angle. We can hear Sam's crying filtered voice over the phone.

SAM
(filtered)
Lisa, I may have to get help. Am I just... yes, yes. I can hear... who? Lisa, why don't you answer the girl? How did she get on this line?

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: 90

Lisa can hear at a distance. Sam is loud over the tiny speaker in the phone. Lisa drops her arm to her side. She is caught. Frozen in this hell.

SAM
(filtered)
Aaah... nooo... AIII... no... where the fuck am I? Is this a dream ...I'm dead! I'm upside down! It isn't your floor ... It's a marble sky ... I'm in a bank of silk clouds!

Lisa is looking at herself in the mirror. Her hand with the phone receiver rests at her side in the folds of her white silk skirt.

ANGLE - Lisa's eyes glint a troublesome thought. Scared to death she looks down.

ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. Down the length of her body we see the back of her hand holding the phone receiver in the silk folds. She lifts the phone receiver and looks at it. We hear Sam out of his mind screaming.

SAM
(filtered)
Lisa, Lisa! No! No! What are they doing!? No!

ANGLE - LISA GASPS

ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. The screaming phone receiver in her hand. The earpiece is smoking molten plastic. It starts to glow. A cloak of flame BUZZZZES swirls over it and then, through the expanding perforations in the earpiece, we start to see what almost appears to be an eye. It is an eye! We hear Sam screaming - and SNAP - anger rages - the eye disintegrates and the receiver turns to hot jelly in her hand. Lisa screams in pain. 280

91 EXT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT 91

Blinding headlights getting brighter are coming from both directions. SKREEEECH. Two unmarked cars have stopped about ten feet on each side of the phone booth, headlights still on high beam, spotlighting Sam. Sam is frozen. He waits five seconds but nothing happens. They just sit there. Ten seconds later - an eternity on the screen - Sam starts to move. Door mounted spots hit him in the face. As he walks to his car the spotlights stay on him. Sam gets in his car. They just sit there.

92 INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT 92

Sam sits in his car. Spotlights trained on his face. We finally see that his right eye is gone. Cauterized.

He reaches slowly and turns on his lights. Nothing from the other cars. He starts his engine and revs it.

He is about to put the car in gear when his door is pulled open. A COP holds a gun. Sam takes the car out of gear. His face is frozen in hate.

The shadow of the man falls across Sam's face.

COP
License and registration, please.

Sam reaches in his pocket...

COP
Slowly.

... and takes out his wallet.

SAM
You're sure you want it?

COP
Yes.

93 Sam hands his license to the cop. An electrical cobra of firee rises in the air off the back of Sam's hand and STING strikes the cop's wrist. The screaming cop backs away, staggering. Sam floorboards it and the car fishtails down the deserted country road. 93

94 INT. CAR - ROAD - NIGHT **280** 94

ANGLE - Sam as he gets the car under control. He throws a look in the rear view mirror. CRACK! A gun shot! We see a bullet hole the size of a quarter in the rear window.

ANGLE - E.C.U. SAM.

We move into his eyes. The side of his face bleeds slightly from the shrapnel of the headrest.

SAM
BURN you bastard!

We hear the frightening SQUEAL of SHC and see a reflective glow of red light.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED: 94

SAM
(amazed)
The word! It's in the word!

95 EXT. CAR. - NIGHT 95

The car makes a sharp skidding turn onto a farm road.

96 INT. CAR - NIGHT 96

SAM
They killed my mother and father like test monkeys! What do they want from me? Does that cunt Rachel know!?
(beat)
I know what I've become! I know what I am! The answer. The messenger here to set it all straight! To save the world!

Static surges on the radio speakers. He drives along with an inspired look on his face. The loud hissing on the radio attracts Sam. He turns it up louder. A faint radio broadcast drifts in and out under the static.

RADIO (V.O.)
...this week at 50% off. This sale won't last forever.

SAM
Fifty... yes, fifty... If I take the population down by 50%, that's a good start! The living 50% would be in mass planetary shock!

280

The radio hiss turns into Sam's voice when he stops speaking.

SAM'S VOICE
(on radio)
This will give MOTHER EARTH time to heal! Probably create a new industry disposing of the bones, and teeth. Billions in that! A percentage would go crazy...be killed by the fit survivors. Level off at about an 80% decrease. That gives us a chance! Man will mutate, evolve to a higher plane.

His voice stops on the radio as he starts to speak out loud again.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: 96

SAM
I am the son of the first thermal nuclear hydrogen bomb. I AM THE FIRE FROM HEAVEN!!

A late news broadcast drifts up through the static. Sam's attention zeroes in.

RADIO (V.O.)
... this incredible wave of spot fires and burnings that has hit L.A. county started two days ago with the tragic burning death of Amy Whittaker.
(Sam's left hand starts to burn again. He just looks at it. He doesn't seem concerned)
Coincidentally, two of the men who died, Dr. Arthur Julian and Dr. Donald Simpson, were both members of the same Nuclear Logic Committee that for years doggedly championed the Cerrito Nuclear Power Plant which finally goes on line one half hour from now.

Sam suddenly calms down. He becomes rational. Almost like his normal self.

SAM
Then I killed them. I didn't catch it from them. They caught it from me. I'm learning fast. I just have to face this thing. My pain has stopped because I asked it to.

280

The radio goes to static. We again hear Sam's voice from his mind into the static.

SAM'S VOICE
(on radio)
I didn't have anything to do with my life plans. I just followed the path of least resistance. I wo... I won... wonder if my entire life was designed! My God! It's so obvious now!

Sam goes into a rage again. Shouting and screaming about what they did to him.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: (2) 96

SAM
I've seen the files! This is not reversible. Olander. My special surrogate father. My atom smashing father. We'll die together!

97 ANGLE - SAM'S P.O.V. 97

Through the windshield we see AN ENORMOUS OLD MANSION.

98 ANGLE - SAM 98

He knows that his world has been controlled, created from that house. Screeeech! The car stops in a billow of thick dust.

Sam catches himself. What is he doing? Talking, no fighting with himself. He starts to cry. It turns into hysteria.

SAM
Or was that the flip side of me? I'm having trouble concentrating. They did something to my mother and father. Oh, God. I don't, can't go on with this... what's happening to me. No. Noo. Noooooo!

99 WIEEEEE. FLASH! A vein in his neck swells in terrible pain. He trembles and fidgets touching his neck. The artery on the side is ballooned to the size of a grape, all black. He cups the growing black goiter in his hand. It's now the size of a golfball and getting bigger. It bursts spraying a spurt of black blood which ignites. The luminescent electric fire makes a wailing sound of death. Sam screams. 99

280

100 EXT. CAR - NIGHT 100

We can see Sam struggling. This new fissure is a bad one. The burn is like an acetylene torch focused to a fine 2 ft. stiletto of rushing blue-green fire. The fire needle is jetting away from Sam's ruptured neck. The fearsome sound of the Fire from Heaven is all around.

Sam's screaming is cracking off and on. He is kicking violent spasms, grabbing feebly at his throat. He's gasping, trying to shout.

SAM
Ssu... suu... ss... sss... sto...sto...!!

101 ANGLE - MEDIUM SHOT - SAM BEHIND THE WINDSHIELD 101

We pull back through the windshield. The car's interior glows bright from the burn. We can hear the screeeeching energy growing louder - a higher pitch now. It's getting brighter. Sam's cries and screams are warping into an apocalyptic primal sound. The awful sound seems to almost harmonize with the sound of the burning.

102 INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT 102

Sam's pitiful screams of pain and death twist into a defiant sound of anger, rage, hate and... strength.

SAM
STOP!!

The fire effect in the car flickers and is gone.

103 OMITTED 103

104 INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT 104

Suddenly Sam starts to gag violently and belches fire. He throws the door open, leans outside and vomits molten chunks of fire on the ground.

After he pukes he feels much better. We can see a slight change in his persona. Strange. Hard to put your finger on. He looks the same - a little more demolished. But, the expression on his face has metamorphosed. Where is the pain? He looks at his terrible burns. He feels them with his hands. The tears across his throat are still there. But, where is the pain and fear? He can still feel the fire burning inside of him. He has accepted that.

280

105 ANGLE - SAM'S P.O.V. UP THE ROAD. 105

The gates to Olander's house.

106 ANGLE - THE TREE COVERED ROAD 106

to Orlander's house. Sam's car blasts through frame and turns into the gates.

107 EXT. GATE - NIGHT 107

Sam's car approaches the small gatehouse and comes to a stop. He toots his horn and a smiling OLD GUARD comes out.

The kindly old gentleman has a big smile on his face as he recognizes Sam.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED: 107

ANGLE - GUARD'S P.O.V.

Sam sits behind the wheel. An extraordinary crooked smile frozen on his face. All of his teeth are exposed.

GUARD
Good evening, Sam. The boss said we might be expecting a visit from you.

SAM
Nice old Mr. Fitzpatrick. Isn't it time you retired?

We can see the fire in Sam's mouth as he talks.

GUARD
He said for you to go right on up. He's waiting up for you.

SAM
Waiting up? Isn't it awfully late?

The guard opens the gate and Sam starts to pull in. As the car passes him we can see the plastic brim on his hat warp. He closes the gate so Sam can't back up and then comes over to the side of the car.

GUARD
Happy birthday, Sam.

Sam looks at the pocket watch. His father's watch. It's 11:45.

SAM
Not for much longer.

280

Then without warning the guard pulls out his gun and points it at Sam's head.

GUARD
Get out and put your hands on the top of your head, Sam!

ANGLE - SAM. His smile warps to an expression we've hardly ever seen. An expression that reads a love of hate and pain.

Sam gets out of the car slowly, almost falling. His leg just won't work.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED: (2) 107

SAM
Only my right arm works, so I don't know how I can handle your request... officer.

He puts his right hand on his head.

GUARD
Get that arm up. I mean it!

SAM
If you want my arm on top of my head, why don't you come over and put it there yourself.

Sam takes his right arm off his head and raises it in the air in a "hold on there" pose.

SAM
Don't fuck up now.

CRACK! A gun goes off.

ANGLE - SAM'S HAND with a bullet hole through the palm.

There are tears wetting Sam's features which flicker between crying and laughter.

SAM
Mr. Fitzpatrick ...

Sam coughs. It hurts. Mr. Fitzpatrick, amazed and shaken, looks at Sam. He can't believe he pulled the trigger. He looks at the gun in his hand. There's a broad stroke of guilt across his face.

280

SAM
We went fishing together. I thought you were my friend.

Mr. Fitzpatrick holsters his gun and walks over to Sam. He shines his flashlight on him.

GUARD
Sam, I'm so sorry...

SAM
(trying to laugh)
You can see... I'm not all here...

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED: (3) 107

His bad leg is giving out. He tries to steady himself against the car door with his three-fingered bad hand. He starts to fall and we can see his rage start to mount. Mr. Fitzpatrick rushes to help.

SAM
(loud)
No! Stay back!!

108 Sam falls into a helpless embrace with the guard. 108

FAWOOOSHHH!

Nuclear blue flames vortex like a tornado in Sam's arms.

109 ANGLE - MR. FITZPATRICK'S UNIFORM 109

covered with dollar sized smoldering holes and full of smoking charred bones that rattle as they hit the ground.

110 ANGLE - SAM. 110

There is grief on his face as he turns and walks towards the house. He's having a hard time with his body. One leg is messed up beyond repair and only a part of one hand is left. He laughs instead of crying in reaction to his pain.

111 EXT. FRONT DOOR OF MANSION - NIGHT 111

Sam faces the open front door and smiles.

112 INT. ENORMOUS MARBLE ENTRY HALL - NIGHT 112

Sam walks in. He looks around.

SAM
Anyone home? Lew, Uncle Samson's here! 280

Sam turns to his right as he hears a squeaking sound. Olander, in his motorized wheelchair and hooked up to an oxygen tank breathing apparatus, rolls into the room from the Library.

OLANDER
Hello, my boy. Come in. Come in.
Always welcome. I kind of hoped you'd drop by.

(CONTINUED)

112 - CONTINUED: 112

SAM
I noticed.
(There is smoke rising off Sam's head and shoulders like early morning mist)
Rachel home? I had a couple of little... items I was hoping to discuss with you.

OLANDER
No, I'm afraid she went out for the evening.
(He starts coughing and wheezing deeply. He spits into his handkerchief)
Cough, cough. Be okay after I catch my breath.
(He looks at Sam. A glow comes from his mouth. Olander speaks with fatherly concern)
You know, son, you don't look so well either. Hasn't Lisa been taking care of you?

SAM
(incensed)
How do you know her?

OLANDER
(smiling)
Lisa and I are old friends.
(beat)
She just called. Looking for you. **280**

SAM
You mean to warn you!
(he screams)
No! I can't believe this!
(Sam looks like he could cry)
Lew, you killed my parents!

OLANDER
I didn't kill your parents! They knew exactly what they were doing. The vaccine they were given was designed to create a shield around their cells to make them impervious to radiation. And it worked!

SAM
For nine months!

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED: (2) 112

OLANDER
Yes! Nine months! How long do you think the first heart transplant patients lived? Days. That's all.

SAM
But, they were sick. My parents were young and healthy!
(beat)
And look at me. Look what you've done to me.

OLANDER
(getting mad)
You know, you're awfully ungrateful. You're a lucky man! I've watched over you like you were mine. I've given you everything. You should thank me.

SAM
(incredulous)
Thank you!?

OLANDER
By all rights you should never have been born. And if it wasn't for me... you never would have been! When your mother got pregnant those idiots thought the project was ruined. They dropped the whole thing!
(he smiles triumphantly)
But, it wasn't a mistake! I gave Brian $25,000 to make that mistake! I had high hopes for what would happen... and you didn't let me down! I'm so proud of you!

280

Little jets of flames are popping off Sam's body.

OLANDER
Don't you see, Sam? I'm you're father. In every sense of the word! Brian Jones was just the mistake part. I made the sun rise twice that morning in 1955! What did Brian Jones do to compare with that!?
(beat)
This is all Marsh's fault. He always wanted to terminate the project, but it wasn't till I brought Lisa into the community that he went over the edge.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED: (3) 112

OLANDER (Cont'd)
He'll go after her now. I know him like I know my own nightmares.

SAM
(loud and crazy)
Why would he do that!?

OLANDER
Because, Lisa's like you, Sam. A product of the project. She was conceived during the last above ground test in '65. Her mother and father... same damn effect. The vaccine worked, but SHC always followed.
(beat)
I'm sorry, Sam. I mean, Lisa and you... I thought you might honestly like her. I hoped you two would produce a child. Learn to control this thing.

Sam stares at Olander with his good eye. His muscles wind tight with hate. He wavers as he somehow manages to hold himself together. Both arms are badly damaged and most of one hand is gone. The other hand is partly blown away from the gunshot. His body is covered with gashes from the burns. Smoke is rising off Sam and up into a giant crystal chandelier 10 ft. over his head. The heat rising causes the crystal to tinkle like wind chimes.

OLANDER
Marsh got tired of waiting for something to happen. Thirty-four years was long enough. He gave you a starter. Put mercury in your toothpaste. I tried to stop him, but he wanted out. 280

SAM
That's a lie! There wasn't anything in my toothpaste! It was in the medicine that you and that bitch Lisa gave me!

Olander is wheezing heavily now. Everything in the room that is made out of plastic is starting to melt. Olander sees this and smiles with satisfaction.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED: (4) 112

OLANDER
What difference does that make!? Look at you!
(He beams at Sam with awe and pride)
I had no idea it would be this extraordinary! I couldn't have planned it better. Can't you see how big this is? You're America's Atomic Man! The world's most sophisticated nuclear weapon!
(beat)
I've waited years! SHC. The cleanest killing system on Earth!

We hear the TING - TING of Sam's pocket watch as it starts to chime midnight. He takes it out of his pocket with great difficulty.

SAM
Let's see.

Olander's plastic oxygen tubing starts to melt. He gasps.

Sam's eyes blast on like sunguns. Electricity starts to spark and crackle from the wall outlets. Sam's body starts to suck energy down from a great crystal chandelier with hundreds of lightbulbs above his head.

POP! FLASH! The little bulbs explode. It looks like a lalique crystal skyrocket erupting.

280

ANGLE - OLANDER

The old man wheels back from under the rain of falling crystal and electrical sparks. He is scared to death.

ANGLE - SAM

He looks like an enormous tree of fire with thousands of branches reaching towards the ceiling.

ANGLE - OLANDER

He clutches at his throat as the plastic tubing on his oxygen feed starts to melt.

ANGLE - SAM

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED: (5) 112

The look on his face is frightening as the power surges into him and back again. Sam's watch is still chiming. He looks at it. Midnight

112A ANGLE - C.U. OF SAM'S WATCH **112A**

Reflected in the watch we see Sam's face flash whiteout.

ANGLE - SAM

Sam's body is left standing where it was, a husk as fine as newspaper ash. Then POW! All over the great room.

112B ANGLE - OLANDER'S POV OF THE CHANDELIER **112B**

Energy swirls all around the shattering crystal. One last spark shoots off the chandelier directly at him.

ANGLE - OLANDER

He ducks as the spark comes right at his head. It goes over his shoulder igniting oxygen escaping from the tanks on his chair. There is a blinding flash. The oxygen is burning under pressure shooting two columns of fire straight up. Olander makes a pathetic gesture and joysticks the motorized wheelchair. He zig-zags all over the room heading for what's left of Sam.

The oxygen tanks give a secondary belch of fire throwing his dead body over the armrest of the chair. He falls on the joystick, making the chair circle endlessly as his body burns.

112C -ANGLE - Sam's pocket watch, lying in the black soot that is all that is left of Sam. We see a trickle of silvery mercury leaking out of the case. The second hand moves two increments and stops. We see a new image etched into the watch's crystal almost like a Rorshach mask over the image of Brian and Peggy. It is Sam's eyes. **112C**

280

113 EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT 113

The driveway is filled with POLICE CARS, FIRE TRUCKS and AN AMBULANCE. There are official looking PEOPLE milling around. We see a gurney loaded into the ambulance. The door is closed and it speeds away.

114 EXT. CERRITO POWER PLANT - NIGHT 114

We see the power plant glowing a bright red-orange from mercury vapor lit cooling towers.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: 114

114A THE CAMERA DOLLIES BACK **114A**

Through a window into Lisa's apartment. We continue through the apartment. We hear an all night FM station playing soft music. We continue to DOLLY BACK and ACROSS. Lisa has fallen asleep in a chair and the frame settles on her. A telephone looms huge in the foreground. Beat. RIIIING - RIIIIING. The phone wakes Lisa.

Lisa looks at it a long time. It continues to ring loudly. Her hand is bandaged from the earlier call. She's afraid.

RIINNNG - RIINNNG. Finally, she reaches for the phone.

LISA
(quietly)
Hello....

ELECTRONIC REPRO OF SAM'S VOICE
Hello, Lisa. How's my best girl?

LISA
Sam! Where are you!? I've been worried sick!

SAM
(filtered)
I'm over at Lew's. I decided to settle in for awhile.
(beat)
You know Lew.

LISA
What's happened! Tell me what's happened. You didn't hurt him did you?

280

SAM
(filtered)
This is very touching. Don't worry. Everything's fine.

LISA
Let me speak to him!

SAM
(filtered)
Oh, I don't think that would be possible just now.

In the background we hear a news report over the radio.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: (2) 114

RADIO (V.O.)
...as the controversial plan finally went on line. In other news, fire broke out at the Belair mansion of industrialist Lewis Olander, killing the reclusive billionaire. Two other deaths, the night watchman and a Los Angeles high school teacher, were also reported...

Lisa gasps. We hear Sam laugh.

SAM
Whoops!

BZZZZZZZ. A high pitched squeal starts to come from the receiver. Lisa jerks the phone away from her head and slams it down on the cradle. It immediately starts to ring again. RINGGG-RINGGG-RINGGG. Lisa's terror builds. Her heart is racing.

The radio broadcast turns to loud static. Then... a voice comes over the speakers.

SAM
Lisa.
(she jumps straight out of her chair)
Why don't you answer the phone? Don't you think you're being a little rude?
(beat)
You know, Lisa, you're a little traitor aren't you?

280

LISA
No! I'm not! I love you, Sam!

SAM
(on radio)
You'd like to know where I am wouldn't you? That was what you were always asking. So you could run and tell Marsh... and Olander!

LISA
No!

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: (3) 114

SAM
(on radio)
Well, I don't care, because now it's too late. I'm at Cerrito. No, let me correct that. I am Cerrito! I'm right smack dab in the middle of the storm. One with the core! Reactor city! And let me tell you, it's better than sex!
(beat)
Now I can do the right thing. I can Save the World! From here I can reach out and touch someone! A thousand people a day. Have to start out small. Spread it all over the nation. That way it won't be noticed. At first.
(beat)
I have to go now. I have a terrible headache. I have to take my medicine! So, watch out when you turn on the lights... or answer the phone... or shake hands! Watch out, Lisa, because you're first!

Lisa is terrified. She switches off the radio. The phone immediately starts to ring. It rings and rings.

115 INT. LISA'S BUILDING - NIGHT 115

Lisa slams the door to her apartment and runs down the hall. Lights flicker as she passes and she shies away from them. Crackling sounds come from the wall outlets.

116 INT. LISA'S CAR - NIGHT **280** 116

Lisa drives the rain-soaked streets aimlessly. Afraid to stop. Suddenly she sees a sign: ALAMEDA STREET. She grabs her pocket book and throws it open. She searches frantically and then dumps the contents on the front seat. She sorts through the junk until she finds what she's looking for. The piece of paper on which she wrote down the address Sam gave her.

1412 ALAMEDA STREET

116A CLOSE ON LISA **116A**

She drives slowly down the street looking at the numbers and pulls up in front of a completely dark house. She sits in her car quietly for a few moments until she steels her nerve and then she opens the door.

117 INT. NINA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 117

The camera MOVES through the darkened kitchen. Outside the window we can see the shadow of someone trying to see in. We HEAR a noise and then the door opens.

LISA
(very quietly)
Hello...

INT. NINA'S KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The house is dark as pitch and Lisa can't see a thing. She is in the kitchen. She walks quietly through the door into the living room. She can just make out the disorder that we saw earlier. There are papers strewn around.

LISA
(still quiet)
Hello ...

117A She starts to walk towards the front hallway and door. Something heavy falls on her shoulder and spins her around. She screams bloody murder. Someone else screams in response. The lights are switched on and a short, stout BLACK WOMAN in a housekeeper's uniform sticks a big revolver right in Lisa's face. **117A**

118 INT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - NIGHT 118

Lisa runs frantically towards the main desk, bumping into people, dodging gurneys. One of them has a near-dead Jennifer on it. She is wrapped head to toe in smoking gauze bandages and her face is covered with burn gel. She is screaming in pain.

LISA
Jennifer! What happened!?

280

JENNIFER
(trying to speak)
Ms. Wilcox ... I ... I ... it must be the present ... I don't know what I've done.

Two ORDERLIES hurriedly wheel Jennifer away. Lisa stares after the gurney transfixed and then snaps herself out of it. She speaks to the nurse on duty who points down a corridor.

118A WE DOLLY BEHIND LISA **118A**

as she walks quickly down the hall. The place is chaotic with activity. Lights go on and off as she passes. Each one scares Lisa.

(CONTINUED)

118 **A** CONTINUED: 118**A**

At each door she goes by a phone rings, making a trail for her. She tries to ignore them but is getting more and more panicky.

She sees the number she's looking for and turns in the door just as the phone in that room starts to ring. Nina, lying in bed, reaches for it.

119 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT 119

LISA
No! Don't answer that!

Nina gives her a funny look and picks up the receiver.

NINA
Hello? Yes, darling. I'm fine. Thanks so much for calling. I'm a little tired now. I'll call you tomorrow. Good-bye.

Lisa is embarrassed.

LISA
I'm a friend of Sam's. He told me to find you.

NINA
Then you know.

LISA
I'm not sure what I know anymore. I think I must be losing my mind.

NINA
Of course you're losing your mind, dear. That's what happens to all traitors!

280

LISA
What?

NINA
(mockingly)
Headache? This should help! It's not medicine. It's homeopathic!

There's a scream. A NURSE and TWO ATTENDANTS with a gurney have just come in the room.

NURSE
But... you were dead two minutes ago!

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: 119

Nina laughs loudly as her face begins to vacuform into a grotesque impression of Sam.

NINA
Death to all traitors!

She jumps out of her bed. Lisa turns and runs for her life as the re-animated little lady, smoke rising off her nightgown, chases her down the corridors.

120 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT 120

Lisa turns a corner and looks back, but Nina is gone.

121 INT. MAIN HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - NIGHT 121

Lisa runs for the door. Somebody yells out her name. She doesn't stop. A hand grabs her arm and she screams.

MARSH
Ms. Wilcox. Lisa. It's alright.

LISA
(almost hysterical)
Please! Let me go.

There is an ORDERLY with Marsh pushing a rolling cart with metal trays on it.

MARSH
(still holding her)
What happened at Olander's? What do you know?

LISA
Nothing! I don't know anything! Let go!

280

Lisa keeps looking over her shoulder. She tries to break free from his grip.

122 INT. NINA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT 122

Nina, her body smoldering, goes over to the closet. She starts to put on her clothes. The smoke rising from her shoulders becomes thicker.

123 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT 123

Marsh and the orderly corral Lisa up against the wall. They try not to draw attention to the fact that they won't let her leave. Lisa is getting frantic. She keeps looking back down the hall.

MARSH
Come, Lisa. We have to go to my office. I have to give you the vaccine.

LISA
(struggling)
Let me go or I'll scream!

MARSH
Shhhhh! You little fool! Don't you know ... You're just like Sam. Those pills you took ... you've been triggered, too. (he points at the rolling cart) There's all that's left of your boyfriend. Do you want to be next?

Lisa looks at the cart. In a little metal tray are Sam's belt, buckle and wallet. The credit cards are warped. She reaches over and picks up his watch. She holds it tightly.

LISA
My God ...

MARSH
That's why it's so imperative that I give you this injection.

280

Lisa cringes at the word "injection." We hear a phone ring. Lisa starts nervously and looks back down the hall.

A uniformed GUARD comes over to them.

GUARD
Excuse me, is your name Lisa Wilcox?
(beat)
There's a call for you at the main desk. Come this way, please.

Lisa panics. She finally breaks free from Marsh's grip and runs towards the main entrance.

MARSH
Lisa!

124 INT. LISA'S CAR - NIGHT 124

Lisa clutches Sam's watch in her hand as she drives through the night with a look of horror on her face.

We see a small trickle of silvery liquid drip from the watch on to her hand. She wipes it off on the seat. She starts to sweat.

The look of horror on her face starts to fade and turn into one of total resignation. She has finally realized there is nothing she can do. Nowhere she can hide. She simply turns her car for home.

125 INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 125

Lisa sits on the couch holding the watch. Alone. Waiting. She looks at her hands, examining them. Looking for the signs.

126 ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. - WINDOW AND BEYOND - NIGHT 126

In the distance we can see the Cerrito power plant, a truly fearful and eerily fantastic image glowing a bright red-orange from mercury vapor lit cooling towers monstrously standing against the thunderheads.

127 ANGLE - THE POWER PLANT 127

FLASH! a craze of lightning bolts splay the orange mercury lit clouds behind the behemoth cooling towers, then...BOOM Thunder reaches us.

128 ANGLE - LISA 128

Lisa sits. Her vacant gaze takes in the nuclear station. ~~flash~~ 280 again, only this time did lightning strike the power plant? (Lisa tenses up) Or did the lightning come from the nuclear plant and strike the sky?

129 ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. THROUGH THE WINDOW. 129
We see electric arcing crackle to life around the metal conductor towers surrounding the nuclear plant. Even from this distance we can hear the turbines change pitch to a nerve stunning ultra high pitch black board squeak that just stays there.

130 ANGLE - LISA 130

Her eyes widen with fear. She knows it's coming. She walks to the window and looks out.

131 ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. WINDOW - NUCLEAR PLANT 131

Nuclear produced electricity bursts into arcs that craze the night sky. The arcing lightning, jumping between the high tension cable towers, is so fierce the air spontaneously combusts into a tremendous fireball. A white-out surge blasts fusing sparks flying into the night like fireworks from ten Fourth of Julys.

ANGLE - THE FIREBALL vortexing into the high tension wire towers. The spinning sphere of nuclear electricity looks like Sam's birthmark. The fireball emits from an electric cable miles away. It travels faster and faster along the cable becoming brighter and larger as it heads straight for Lisa's building.

It travels right towards us like a fiery locomotive, and then... IT HITS THE SIDE OF LISA'S BUILDING with an enormous explosion. Sparks and flames fly in every direction.

132 INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 132

The apartment rocks as the blast hits the building. Lisa is thrown back violently, knocking over the end table. The lamp and the telephone go flying. She lands in the armchair. We can see the sparks showering over her shoulder outside the window. and then... all is quiet. Calm. No sparks. No fire. No noise. Nothing.

KK-SMASHH! The front door blasts open. The silhouette of a man is framed in the doorway.

The man quietly walks forward. We hear muted metal clicking sounds coming from the shadows. We see tendrils of smoke dr[illegible] 280 away from the moving silhouette.

ANGLE - LISA. With no one to hear or help her, her wide eyes follow the man as he gets closer.

ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. A dark, shadowed hand that seems to be smoldering moves into the light spilling up from the lamp on the floor. The hand is holding a shiny cylinder. Smoke drifts off of it. The cylinder can now be seen in the light. A huge chrome 50cc hypo with a needle at least 3 inches long. A thread of smoke rises off the tip. It is being held by a black leather glove. As the hypo is raised higher and higher we PAN UP to see Dr. Marsh.

MARSH
Just another loose end your atomic father left for me to tie up.

Marsh raises the hypo to plunge.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: 132

ANGLE - LISA scrambles to get out of his way but it's too late. Dr. Marsh stabs through the air catching Lisa in the forearm.

ANGLE - LISA'S ARM as the long needle slides all the way through her arm and through the bottom side of the arm rest. The exposed needle tip discharges all of its isotopes. The stream shoots straight at the bare bulb and the telephone receiver. RINGGGGG. CRACK! The bulb shatters. Thick snake-like forks of energy jet out of the bulb and the phone, joining together. The combined blast of energy snaps Marsh crashing to the floor.

It's over. All is still, quiet for about two seconds.

ANGLE - LISA. She looks at her arm and then her face freezes in horror.

Then the awful sound of SHC fills the room. It is deafeaning. Lisa covers her eyes. Her voice is blown out from screaming. A warped hoarse screech growls in her throat and she opens her eyes.

ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. Marsh is rising up ... from the dead. He slowly unfolds to a standing position towering over Lisa. The body is taking in energy from all around him. Vortexing luminous green fire jetstreams into the body. CRACK! As the mouth flies open, we can see the fire down his throat.

SAM/MARSH
Hello, Lisa... I came back for you.

She tries to run, but he blocks the door. She turns and runs down the hallway. 280

ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. as Sam/Marsh rounds the corner, coming down the hall after her.

132A -WHOOOOSH! The fire leaps up from his mouth and the veil of blood red and green fire flows up and over Sam/Marsh's head. Fingers of green flame streak his body. Hundreds of punctures blow shards of fire stuff out of the body which is completely cloaked in a skin of swirling fire. 132A

ANGLE - LISA. Her eyes are white. She gasps for air.

132B ANGLE - SAM 132B

The body of fire slowly death walks after her. Sam/Marsh's face sears with a surgical thin line of firelight so bright it's blinding Lisa. His face vacuforms into a grotesque simile of Sam.

(CONTINUED)

132 B CONTINUED: (2) 132B

SAM
So, did the doctor tell you anything I should hear?

He jabs at his chest for punctuation and his hand sinks into his sternum up to the wrist.

Sam laughs and the skin starts to slip away from the bone. It's consumed before it can reach the floor. He sheds his skeleton and it hits the floor, turning to ash. The flame loops back into the body. The body is burning fire.

LISA
(hyper-ventilating to the max)
Oh... aaa... no...oo... please. I, I, I'm s... s... so afraid.
(beat)
Can you help me?... with... my being afraid?... Sam?

Lisa backs into the bathroom.

133 INT. LISA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 133

ANGLE - Lisa continues backing up. The mirrored room lights up green as Sam enters. All the flesh has been consumed and what we and Lisa see is an etheric body of luminous fire and atomic energy. The nuclear skin swirls on the surface of Sam's body. The face is the face of Sam. His fire skin looks like sun spots curling on the surface. 280

SAM
Lisa, I don't know... why I exist in this state of awareness. Do you?

LISA
Please, Sam! No! No!

SAM
I don't know why I exist now anymore than I did before.

ANGLE - Lisa backs up into the mirrored wall and slides down to the floor.

SAM
I've been thinking that maybe I would take you back with me. Back to the core with me, Lisa.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: 133

Lisa trembles and cries. She looks up into Sam's fiery eyes.

LISA
You want me to come?

SAM
I often wonder if it would help to have you in there with me. Travelling is a snap. The phone lines can take us anywhere. We can get in anybody's head and I don't even need to look up the number. I just know it.
(beat)
I can take you with me, or I can just trigger you... like you triggered me... and let's see what happens.

LISA
(out of control crying)
I've <u>been</u> triggered.! I took pills, too! And the watch??

She holds it up by the chain.

SAM
The failsafe. Nice touch.
(beat)
I can take your fire with me. I can burn it out of you... here and now!

LISA
Oh, Sam. I'm sorry if you think I betrayed you! I didn't know. Sam, I loved you... I love you...

280

SAM
Then kiss me, Lisa. One last time.

As he comes closer he raises his luminescent flaming hand to touch her. We can see that her body, face and hair are soaked with sweat from the heat. The sweat is burning off so fast that steam is rising from her. He starts to lay his hand on her. His fingers have elongated into three-foot long, pinpoint torches. He runs them caressingly up her sides and her back bursts into flames.

Lisa screams in pain and rolls around trying to smother the flames.

Sam is becoming brighter. He is reaching his hands out for her.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: (2) 133

SAM
There is a clear reason for this ordered disorder. Don't ask me why. I think that I am the vaccine for the Earth. The Earth is diseased and the sickness is humankind.

The fire-like glow in the room is overwhelming. Everything made of plastic is melting and falling all around them.

A four foot plastic stand with an oversized mirror mounted on it starts to melt. The mirror is hit by melting plastic debris and starts to fall. It gets caught in the venetian blind cord and stops just short of Lisa's head. She looks at it. So does Sam. They see the plastic washers that hold it in it's yoke start to melt and the mirror swivels slowly around to the magnifying side. Sam's giant eyes fill the magnified surface. Like in the watch's crystal.

Sam looks up and for the first time sees himself in the magnifying mirror. At his feet lies Lisa, screaming and writhing in pain.

ANGLE - SAM'S P.O.V. - His eyes lock on his own eyes in reflection and for the first time he sees what he has become. There is a sudden realization, a sudden comprehension and a sadness so deep that we are moved. His eyes gazing at his eyes has an effect like feedback. Sam amps nuclear bright.

Sam's fingers are still dancing around Lisa, but as he stares into his own eyes he holds Lisa pinned to the floor while he starts to raise one hand up. 280

Slowly Sam extends a fiery finger and tentatively touches the mirror...WHAP! The mirror has grabbed Sam and is sucking his fiery image into itself funneling down at the finger. The fusion red fire changes to a white glowing energy on the mirror's surface. It almost looks like mercury.

The glow refracts from one mirrored surface to the next, accelerating with each new image until the room is filled with a criss-crossed warren of laser-thin beams.

As the speed of the reflected beams increases, we can hear a loud humming sound becoming more and more apparent. In the cacophony it almost seems as if we can hear slight strains of his mother's lullaby. Suddenly the mirror takes charge, drawing the energy that is Sam in deeper and deeper until he is sucked into his own reflection like a nuclear explosion in reverse.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: (3) 133

There is a momentary lull and then WHOOOOOSH! All of the concentrated energy is blasted out of the mirror, creating a vacuum draft so intense that it sucks he fire out of Lisa and the watch.

The white comet bursts from the hall and out the window.

134 EXT. LISA'S WINDOW - NIGHT 134

We see a bright white light as Sam's energy blasts out of the window and disperses in a billion different directions. And then all is quiet.

135 INT. LISA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 135

Lisa stirs. There is virtually nothing left of her clothing. As she stands up slowly, we see the burned silhouette of her body drawn on the floor by Sam's fingers.

She starts to cry. She cries from relief. And she cries from pain. The pain she feels and the pain she knows that Sam felt.

136 She makes her way to the window. To see the nuclear power plant 136
The whine of the plant pitches up and hums along nice and smooth as the lights in the neighborhood amp up.

She is still clutching Sam's pocket watch. She looks at it. The hands are still stopped at midnight. But, then suddenly the second hand starts to move. We hear the watch gently ticking. It starts to chime. TING - TING - TING.

THE END

280

NOTE: SCENE WITH SAM AND LISA DRIVING TO HOSPITAL.

A58 **INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT**

Sam is completely frantic as Lisa drives as fast as she can. He has a white cloth wrapped around his arm.

SAM
It's true! I know it!

LISA
Please, Sam!

SAM
First Amy Whittaker and then Dr. Simpson... and I was with them both! They burned to death! Spontaneous combustion!
(beat)
SHC! I caught it from them! Whatever it is, I've got it now, too!

LISA
(trying to calm him)
No you don't!

SAM
Look at me! I'm burning up!

Lisa bursts into tears.

LISA
Oh God, Sam... it's just like your parents!

SAM
What are you talking about?

LISA
It's alright. I know how you feel. My parents burned to death, too.

SAM
My parents didn't burn! They drowned!

Lisa looks like she understands why he would make something like this up. Sam gets mad.

SAM
Where did you get an idea like that!?

(CONTINUED)

A

A58 CONTINUED:

Lisa tries to change the subject.

LISA
I don't know. I thought I heard it somewhere.

SAM
From who!? Who would say something like that!?

LISA
Lew.

SAM
What is this with Lew? I don't get it. How do you know him?

LISA
I've known him all my life. He's taken care of me since my parents died, too. That's how I know about yours.
(beat)
We owe him everything. If it wasn't for him we wouldn't even know each other.

SAM
What!

LISA
Ohhh... I'm so embarrassed. He set the whole thing up. He got me my job at school just so we'd meet.

Sam is geting very agitated.

SAM
I don't believe this!

LISA
I didn't even know at first.

SAM
Why didn't you tell me!?

LISA
I wanted to, but he said you'd be upset... so I went along with it.
(she looks at him anxiously)
I'm sorry if it was wrong. I love you, Sam.

(CONTINUED)

A 5.

A58 CONTINUED:

She reaches to touch him and WHOOSH! Sam's left arm re- 2/8
ignites. They are both freaked out. Lisa tries to maintain control of the car while trying to beat out the fire on Sam's hand with her coat. All around them the plastic is starting to get hot and sag. The car swerves precariously as the steering wheel begins to melt and become almost useless.

C 1.

NOTE: SCENE BEFORE SAM GOES TO OLANDER'S HOUSE

A102 INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (existing wall flats, a closet, a door, a bed and a dresser)

There's a half-packed suitcase on her bed.

Her hand is burned. She is wrapping a dressing around it. She's almost hyper-ventilating as she dials the phone.

LISA
Lew! Sam's gone mad! The whole world's gone mad!

OLANDER
Lisa, darling, relax... everything is going to be alright. Tell me what happened.

LISA
Lew, there was fire! It came out of the telephone and tried to kill me! It was Sam! He made it happen!

OLANDER
Nothing more than a slight electro-static reaction. Like selective earthquakes. A minor release of tension. I talked to the doctor. The fire is isolated to his arm. You'll see... once the pills you gave him take effect, he'll be fine.

She relaxes a bit.

LISA
Alright, Lew.

OLANDER
And, how about you? Have you been taking your pills, too?

LISA
Yes. Whenever my head hurts.

OLANDER
No. Not just when your head hurts. You have to take them at the regular intervals. They're the only antidote we have. The only thing that can counteract the effects of that damn mercury contamination.

NOTE: TWO EXTRA SHOTS TO BE ADDED TO SCENE WHEN SAM BURNS TWO COPS.

A94 EXT. CAR - NIGHT

TWACK! A bullet hits the rear window of the car and goes through Sam's shoulder. 2/8

He SCREAMS and fire blasts out of his mouth obliterating the windshield.

CUT TO:

A95 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

WIDE SHOT - The Studebaker pulls over to the side of the road. There is smoke coming out of the windows. 2/8

It waits there for a few moments... and then pulls out into the road again and drives away.

NOTE: SCENE AFTER SAM HAS KILLED OLANDER THROUGH TO END OF FILM

A114 INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (existing wall flats, a closet, a door, a bed and a dresser)

Lisa is packing her suitcase.

She has a crippling migraine headache. She takes a little bottle like the one Sam had out of her suitcase and swallows two pills.

The radio is on.

RADIO
... and after ten years of controversy and court battles the Trinidad Beach Nuclear Power Plant finally went on line at Midnight tonight...

Lisa looks out the window at the plant. It glows with a surge in the distance. Lightening fills the sky. We hear thunder.

The phone starts ringing, but she doesn't answer it. She just stares at it as it rings. Her answering machine picks up.

LISA
(machine)
Hello, this is Lisa. I'm not in right now, but if you'll leave your name and number after the tone I'll get back to you.

RACHEL'S VOICE
(on machine)
Lisa, hello! This is Rachel.., Sam's ex... are you there... pick up if you are... it's urgent that I speak with you! Dr. Marsh needs to see you... hello... hello! Damn!

There's a CLICK and then DIAL TONE.

We hear a BOOM of thunder. The room lights up from lightening.

Lisa goes out to the balcony.

A115 EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Lisa looks at the nuclear plant. There's an enormous power

(CONTINUED)

A115 CONTINUED:

surge and the sky lights up. The telephone poles give off a burst of electricity.

Lisa walks outside on the balcony. A storm hits. There's fourth of July of Lightning. The cooling towers at the power plant blow amber light hundreds of feet into the air. There's a pinpoint of lightning that's coming on a collision course towards her like a comet.

She backs into the living room.

The fireball hits the side of the building. The force of the explosion knocks her down into the chair.

KK-SMASHH! The front door blasts open. The silhouette of a man is framed in the doorway.

The man quietly walks forward. We hear muted metal clicking sounds coming from the shadows. We see tendrils of smoke drift away from the moving silhouette.

ANGLE - LISA. With no one to hear or help her, her wide eyes follow the man as he gets closer.

ANGLE - LISA'S P.O.V. A dark shadowed hand that seems to be smoldering moves into the light spilling up from the lamp on the floor. The hand is holding a shiny cylinder. Smoke drifts off of it. The cylinder can now be seen in the light. A huge chrome 50cc hypo with a needle at least 3 inches long. A thread of smoke rises off the tip. It is being held by a black leather glove. As the hypo is raised higher and higher we PAN UP to see Dr. Marsh.

MARSH
Just another loose end your atomic father left for me to tie up.

Marsh raises the hypo to plunge.

ANGLE - LISA scrambles to get out of his way but it's too late. Dr. Marsh stabs through the air catching Lisa in the forearm.

ANGLE - LISA'S ARM as the long needle slides all the way through her arm and through the bottom side of the arm rest. The exposed needle tip discharges all of its isotopes. The stream shoots straight at the bare bulb and the telephone

(CONTINUED)

Just need 2 shots shot: Answering machine
Shot of Lisa through crystal ball

A115 CONTINUED:

Receiver. RINGGGGG. CRACK! The bulb shatters. Thick snake-like forks of energy jet out of the bulb and the phone, joining together. The combined blast of energy snaps Marsh crashing to the floor.

Lisa runs out into the hallway.

A116 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

She sees the EXIT sign, pulls open the door and starts to run down the fire stairs.

A117 INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

She stumbles and falls.

She looks back up the stairs towards the door and sees a shadowy figure with the hypodermic needle. It's Marsh. His body is smoldering. His face is all burnt.

Lisa screams.

She looks at her hand. It's starting to glow. She gets up and starts to run.

She screams again as Marsh closes the distance between them. He catches her on the second landing and they struggle as Marsh tries to finish the job he started. Marsh is half destroyed and weak. Lisa manages to turn the hypodermic on him and plunges it into his guts.

Marsh screams, turns and falls over the railing. He CRASHES through a pile of plate glass that cuts him open down the middle. His burning guts spill all over the ground.

A118 Lisa's hand is still smoldering and glowing as she pulls open the door and goes into the garage. There are headlights shining on her. A car is just sitting, waiting, with the motor running.

Rachel gets out of the car.

RACHEL
Where's Dr. Marsh?

LISA
(hysterical)
He's dead! He tried to kill me! Look!

(CONTINUED)

A118 CONTINUED:

She holds up her smoldering hand.

RACHEL
My God! What's happening to you!?

Rachel spots a fire extinguisher on the wall and runs for it. She turns it on Lisa and covers her hand with foam.

Instead of putting it out the fire flares up even worse, blasting through the foam.

LISA
Stop! You're making it worse!

RACHEL
I know.

She continues spraying Lisa from head to toe. The fire seems to feed on the foam. Spots of smoldering fire are spreading all over her.

LISA
Stop! Please!

Rachel keeps spraying.

Suddenly a black, sooty, crispy hand grabs her. It's Sam... a disintegrated firey mess.

Behind them we see the Studebaker.

Sam and Rachel struggle and she drops the fire extinguisher. The Rachel goes up in a ball of flames... like Brian and Peggy. All that's left is a blackened body and skull.

Sam turns towards Lisa. She's still smoldering and flaming.

He walks towards her. She screams.

SAM
Lisa. No...

She turns and runs back towards the stairwell. Sam follows.

SAM
Don't run!

She pulls open the door and runs back into the stairwell. Sam follows.

A119 INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

A119 CONTINUED

Lisa stumbles on the landing and Sam is there.

The intense heat from his flaming body is lighting up the confined space of the stairwell. Suddenly the sprinklers go on spraying water all over Sam and Lisa.

The fire on Lisa starts to flare up. She screams.

Sam's entire body glows hotter and hotter. The flames are magnifying a hundred times.

He stares wildly at Lisa as the concrete below him starts to melt.

SAM

Lisa!!

It's almost as if a nuclear meltdown has been activated. A hole is opening up in the concrete. Light is coming up thrpugh it. It goes to the center of the earth.

The pure energy and fire that Sam has become is starting to vortex around the hole. It is being sucked down inside almost like a whirlpool.

Lisa is screaming at the top of her lungs as Sam's body starts disappearing down the hole. The flames on her are getting worse.

Before he's totally gone, Sam, with one last monumental effort, stretches out a long firey arm and all the fire on Lisa starts to suck off her intertwining with his. He's pulling the fire out of her until it vortexes with his own down the endless hole.

Lisa's fies is gone. She's left standing on the landing looking down at the steaming hole. Shattered and burned, but alive.

All the screaming stops.

THE END